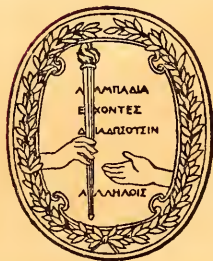


# LEW WALLACE

An Autobiography

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I

ILLUSTRATED



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## CONTENTS OF VOL. I

### I

Belief in Christianity—Ancestry—John Paul Jones, uncle of grandmother—Andrew Wallace, grandfather—Letters from Almira—Professor of mathematics at West Point—David Wallace—Morse telegraph and defeat for Congress—Member of Congress—Lieutenant-Governor—Governor—Judge Court of Common Pleas—Died September, 1859 . . . . . Page 1

### II

Birthplace—Appearance—Removal to Covington—Death of brother John—Covington—Nebeker's ferry—Servant-girl's story of hanging—Fear of ghosts—The Irish school-master—Learns to draw pictures of battles—Little colonel—Black Hawk War—Review of militia by Lieutenant-Governor—Playing Scottish chiefs—Bruce's heart . . . . . Page 8

### III

A woman teacher—Studies geography—Truancy—Autumn and winter—Advent of stove—The circus—Servant-girl's superstition—Illness of mother—Death and burial—Mrs. John Hawkins Page 25

### IV

Goes to college—"Nuts"—Mother's apparition to William—Empty house—David Wallace—Runs off to Crawfordsville—Wabash College—First appearance as student—The seminary—Reverend H——t—The Kerrs—The farm—The new mother . . Page 35

### V

Father elected governor—Removal to Indianapolis—The capital—Sketching in church—Jacob Cox—Learns to paint—First picture—State-house library—Books—Professor Hoshour—Lessons in English—*Lorenzo Altisonant*—The turning-point . . . Page 47



## CONTENTS OF VOL. I

### VI

The literary society—Goldsmith's essay—Historical poem—Smith and Powhatan—*The Man-at-Arms: A Tale of the Tenth Century* . . . . . Page 60

### VII

Youth—The trip to Tippecanoe battle-ground—The red petticoat—Attempt to go to Texas—Capture by Dr. S——rs and a constable—School bills—Life at home—Reading Macaulay—English reviews—Leave home . . . . . Page 73

### VIII

Enter office of Robert S. Duncan—Buy a gun—Preparation for authorship—Study of grammar—Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*—Begin *The Fair God*—Dancing-lessons . . . . . Page 85

### IX

The military companies—"Marion Rifles"—Sham battle—Henry Clay—Reporter for legislature, 1844-45—Studies law with his father . . . . . Page 93

### X

First law practice—War with Mexico—Interest in war news—Examined for attorney's license—First conflicts with the Mexicans—Captain Charles May—Governor Whitcomb—Judge Isaac Blackford . . . . . Page 100

### XI

Opens recruiting-office in Indianapolis for volunteers for war with Mexico—The company leaves for New Albany *via* Edinburg in wagons—Three Indiana regiments encamped at Camp Clark—Colonel Drake—Henry S. Lane—Landing in New Orleans—General Jackson—Voyage to Brazos—The turtle—Ship . . . . . Page 114

### XII

Brazos—Death of Reck—The camp at the mouth of the Rio Grande—Sickness—Suffering—Burials—Major Lane appeals to General Taylor for relief . . . . . Page 121

### XIII

The march to Monterey—Attempt to go with the army—Paris C. Dunning—An instructor in tactics—The episode with Stipp . . . . . Page 129

## CONTENTS OF VOL. I

### XIV

The march to Walnut Springs—The church robbery at Cervalvo—  
The inquiry—The doctor's confession on the return . . . Page 136

### XV

Order to return to former camp—General Taylor's act—Lieutenant-Colonel Nave resigns—Major Lane elected to his place—The killing of Captain Thornton—Carvajal—The attack on Old Reynosa—The town spared—Gratitude of the women—The serenade . . . . . Page 143

### XVI

The First Indiana at Walnut Springs—General Taylor—The camp at Walnut Springs—A visit to Monterey—An adventure in the chaparral—A test of courage—The first panic . . . Page 151

### XVII

The battle of Buena Vista — February, 1847 — Permission to go to the front — Saltillo — La Rinconada — Biscuits and onions—The Kentucky lieutenant—The adobe house—The three days' siege . . . . . Page 159

### XVIII

Saltillo—February 25th—General Wool—Major Cravens—The field of Buena Vista after the battle—The Indiana regiments—The disposition of troops—Description of the battle—Mexican forces and generals (names)—The first day's fight—Colonel Gell—Colonels Hadden and Davis—Marshall—The fight in the ravine—Violation of flag of truce—Bragg—"A little more grape, Bragg"—The day is saved . . . . . Page 163

### XIX

General Taylor's report of the battle of Buena Vista—Report of court of inquiry exonerating Indiana regiments charged with cowardice—Colonel Bowles—A physician and botanist—Brigadier-General Lane—The battle . . . . . Page 177

### XX

Departure from Walnut Springs, May 24, 1847—Mustered out—Reception at New Orleans—Sergeant S. Prentiss—Robbed of savings—Return to Indianapolis—Resume law—*The Fair God*—Apply for license again from the Supreme Court . . . Page 193

## CONTENTS OF VOL. I

### XXI

June, 1848 — The Whig national convention — Nomination and election of Taylor — Edit a campaign paper opposing Taylor — Indiana refuses to vote for Taylor — A deficit of six hundred dollars — Left in the lurch — Become a Democrat of the straitest sect . . . . . Page 201

### XXII

Major Isaac C. Elston — His home — Susan Elston — College commencement, July, 1848 — Courtship — Receive license from Supreme Court . . . . . Page 206

### XXIII

Return to Covington — Senator Hannegan — A wager — D. W. Voorhees — The violin — Judge Ristine — The political meeting at Chambersburg — Mr. M — y — Justice Glasscock — To Danville, Illinois, with Voorhees — Abraham Lincoln . . . . . Page 214

### XXIV

Made prosecuting attorney — James Wilson — Rival orators — David Brier and Dan Mace — The violin and the interrupted meeting — Removal to Crawfordsville, 1853 — *The Fair God* — Scribners' "agent" . . . . . Page 224

### XXV

The Republican and other parties in Indiana — Party leaders Lane, Colfax, Allen, Defrees — Contest over slavery — Compromise measures — Stephen A. Douglas and "Squatter Sovereignty" — Thomas A. Hendricks — Joseph E. McDonald — Freedom or slavery — Three specifications . . . . . Page 231

### XXVI

The prospect of civil war — Preparations — Study of tactics — Organization of Montgomery Guards — Zouaves — Disapproved by "solid citizens" — Record of company — All commissioned officers . . . . . Page 242

### XXVII

The state Democratic convention — Stephen A. Douglas — Pledges Indiana to support Buchanan and the South — I protest — Elected State Senator — Bill for restraining divorce — Bill for choosing United States Senators by General Assembly — The Douglas and Lincoln debate — First doubts as to Democracy . . . Page 248

## CONTENTS OF VOL. I

### XXVIII

The political situation—Kansas—Democratic secret conference in Indianapolis—Sympathy with the South—I leave the meeting—The reconciliation with Morton—Offer services if needed—Sumter fired on—Telegram from Morton—April 13, 1861—In court at Frankfort—Ride to Colfax on horseback—Thence to Indianapolis by train . . . . . Page 257

### XXIX

Interview with Morton at state-house—Appointed adjutant-general—President's call for seventy-five thousand men—State co-operates—Raises quota—Arrival in Indianapolis—Camp Morton—Eleventh Regiment—Zouaves—Barracks . . . . . Page 263

### XXX

Uniform of the Eleventh Regiment Gray Zouaves—Mrs. Cady—"Remember Buena Vista"—Sent to Evansville—Drill—The passing steamer—Winfield Scott—Ordered to Cumberland, Maryland . . . . . Page 270

### XXXI

The route to Cumberland—Reception in Indianapolis and Cincinnati—The arrival in Grafton—General Tom Morris—The situation at Cumberland—Colonel McGinnis—The arrival in Cumberland—The encampment . . . . . Page 278

### XXXII

From New Creek to Romney—Capture of a rebel major—Surprise prevented—The broken suspender-buckle—The enemy retreats—The welcome of the negroes—The incident of the farm-house—Rebel supplies captured . . . . . Page 285

### XXXIII

In camp at Cumberland—*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*—Congratulations from General Scott—Help refused—General Patterson—General McClellan—Corporal David Hay—The Fight of the Scouts—Colonel Biddle and the Pennsylvania Militia . . . . . Page 291

### XXXIV

Between Romney and Cumberland—The thirteen scouts—Silverheels—Farley and Hay—Spoils of battle—Virginia losses—At the culvert—Hand-to-hand fight—Hallowell—The death of Hollenback—Search for the dead—Congratulations from Patterson, McClellan, and Colfax . . . . . Page 297



# CONTENTS OF VOL. I

## XXXV

Ordered to Martinsburg—Joe Johnston and Beauregard—Arrival of baggage-train—Meeting with Patterson—Mexican War reminiscences—Fitz-John Porter—Colonel Stone—The rivalry of the Massachusetts regiment—A competitive drill . . . Page 308

## XXXVI

General Scott in command—Johnston at Harper's Ferry—Beauregard at Bull Run—Diagram—General Patterson's operations—The movement on Manassas—The Eleventh Regiment's willingness to remain beyond term of enlistment—Its return to Indianapolis . . . Page 315

## XXXVII

The Eleventh Indiana—Its character—Tribute to General McGinnis . . . Page 324

## XXXVIII

Eleventh Regiment re-enlists for three years—Invited to join McClellan's command—Goes to St. Louis with Frémont—Headquarters—Inactivity—Cold reception—Transferred to Smith's division—Paducah . . . Page 326

## XXXIX

Removal of regiment to Paducah—Map—Plans for opening the Mississippi River—Operations in central Tennessee—Note: Grant and the Philadelphians at City Point—Forts Henry and Donelson . . . Page 333

## XL

Arrival in Paducah—General Charles F. Smith—His headquarters—Conversations—Promotion to rank of brigadier-general September 3, 1861 . . . Page 338

## XLI

Taking leave of the regiment—The staff—Tearing down the rebel flag—General Smith's attitude—Grant's visit at Paducah—Damaging newspaper stories . . . Page 346

## XLII

The advance to Viola—Burning of the town—*Conestoga* and Lieutenant-Commander Phelps—The fugitive slave—The reconnoissance at Panther Island—Fort Henry—Colonel Lloyd Tilghman . . . Page 354

## CONTENTS OF VOL. I

### XLIII

The brigade organized—The advance upon Fort Henry—Fort Heiman—The *Conestoga*—John, the horse—The Chicago Battery—Pete Wood's Minnesingers—The occupation of Fort Henry—The mail-bag . . . . . Page 365

### XLIV

Lieutenant-Commander Phelps and the *Conestoga*—Grant's council of war—McClelland—The attack on Donelson decided—Left behind—Major Ross makes a suggestion—In readiness to join Grant—The night-watch . . . . . Page 373

### XLV

Encamped at Dover—Ordered to Donelson—Mrs. Crisp's house—Grant's headquarters—Report to Grant—Assigned to centre position in the line of battle—Separated from the Eleventh Regiment—Lunch with Grant—Thayer . . . . . Page 382

### XLVI

Take position—Cold weather—Heiman's tent—The captain's basket—Foote's defeat—The disabled gun-boats . . . . . Page 390

### XLVII

John, the horse—McClelland falls back in disorder—A precarious position—Major Brayman—A panic—Rawlins—The rout turned—Colonel W. H. L. Wallace—Wood's battery . . . . . Page 397

### XLVIII

Before Donelson—General McClelland—The road recovered—The Eleventh Regiment reappears—Troops on the hill-side—Cruft and Ross . . . . . Page 410

### XLIX

The height won—The dead on the field—Johnson, the servant—Stores stolen—The sleep on the field—Major Ross—The flag of truce—The entrance to Fort Donelson—General Buckner and staff—Captain Walker—The formal surrender—Union advantages . . . . . Page 420



## CONTENTS OF VOL. I

### L

The return to Fort Henry—A new command of twelve regiments—  
Captain Hillyer—The report—Coldness at Grant's headquarters—  
The Third Division—The sword from Crawfordsville . Page 434

### LI

New opportunities for Grant—General Albert S. Johnston—Grant  
made a major-general but removed by Halleck—The advance—  
Smith in command—Arrival at Savannah, Tennessee—Smith's  
accident and death—Movement to Crump's Landing . Page 440

### LII

The topography of the Snake Creek region—Bell and Carpenter—  
A choice of roads—The bridges—Johnston's advance—The mes-  
senger to Grant—Grant in Savannah, Tennessee . . Page 448

### LIII

The ride to Stoney Lonesome—Whitelaw Reid—"Agate"—The  
first order from Grant—The second—The third—The Shunpike—  
Wallace's Bridge—The countermarch—A night in the rain—*En*  
*route* for Pittsburg Landing—Brown and Thayer . . Page 459

### LIV

The Army of the Tennessee—Map—No general-in-chief—Grant still  
at Savannah—No knowledge of Johnston's advance—No in-  
trenchments—No line of battle—Grant in limbo—General Sher-  
man's statement—Colonel E. C. Dawes—Grant—Jacob Ammen—  
McClermand . . . . . Page 476

### LV

General Albert Sidney Johnston—Lee—Departments of Virginia  
and Tennessee—General Johnston's plan of attack—Confederate  
testimony as to the surprise of Grant—Colonel Jordan—Will-  
iam P. Johnston—Whitelaw Reid—The events of Sunday morn-  
ing . . . . . Page 492

## CONTENTS OF VOL. II

### LVI

The fighting done by the Army of the Tennessee—Rain and darkness—The surprise by Johnston—Desertions—Diagrams 1 and 2—Colonel Stuart—Prentiss—Terrible loss of life—Gaps in the line of battle—Sherman—Killing of officers—The arrival of Grant—The *Tigress*—Sherman—The death of Johnston . . . Page 503

### LVII

John, the horse—Brown's battery—Thurber—General Wallace in battle—An artillery duel—General Grant in the field—No orders—The struggle at Tilghman's Creek—Whittlesey—Brown out of ammunition—Colonel Stuart—The drummer-boys—Woods and the Seventy-sixth Ohio—The dead in the field—The deserted camp . . . . . Page 541

### LVIII

No pursuit—Arrival of General Halleck—The meeting—At Shiloh—Run—The book on tactics—Beauregard—General Grant after Shiloh—Halleck commander-in-chief—The visit of Halleck's orderlies—The criticism . . . . . Page 570

### LIX

The evacuation of Corinth—The removal of all stores—The camp at Raleigh—The destruction of the Memphis & Ohio Railroad—The appearance of contrabands—A motley following—Colonel Slack—Richardson and Knox edit the Memphis *Avalanche*—The stay in Memphis—A pleasant sequel . . . . . Page 581

### LX

Relieved from command—Two months at home—Ordered to Kentucky by Morton—Colonel of the Sixty-sixth Indiana—Henry W. Wadsworth—Buell at Nashville—The advance of Kirby Smith—Garrett Davis . . . . . Page 589

## CONTENTS OF VOL. II

### LXI

General Nelson's defeat — The defence of Cincinnati — Thomas Saunders—Headquarters at the Burnet House—Mayor Hatch—Martial law proclaimed (September 2, 1862)—Fortifications behind Covington—The "Squirrel Hunters"—Seventy-two thousand men for defence—Buchanan Read . . . . Page 603

### LXII

General Wright returns to Cincinnati—Orders countermanded and re-issued—Captain Worthington—General Heth's advance—Spies on both sides—Heth falls back—General Wallace thanked by Chamber of Commerce and Ohio legislature—What followed . Page 618

### LXIII

Ordered to Columbus—Camp Chase—State of camp and men—Paid off—Ordered to Minnesota to fight Indians—The stay in Columbus—Murdock's readings for the Sanitary Commission . Page 629

### LXIV

Relieved of command—Appointed on the Buell Commission to preside—Donn Piatt—Benn Pitman—Buell—Proceedings of the commission—Report . . . . . Page 641

### LXV

Again relieved—Telegrams from Halleck in Cincinnati—Morgan's raid—Called to Morton's assistance—Sherman's letter to General Wallace—Sherman's conversation with Grant—Telegram to Secretary Stanton, declining to make speeches in the campaign, September 21, 1863 . . . . . Page 654

### LXVI

Given a command—Turning-point in military career—Interview with Lincoln—Stanton—Townsend—The Middle Department—Reverdy Johnson—Henry Winter Davis—Garrett—Baltimore—Military rule . . . . . Page 668

### LXVII

The election in Maryland—Formation of staff—Visit to the governor—Troops for the polls—Slavery abolished in Maryland by constitutional amendment—Letter from Henry Winter Davis . Page 678

## CONTENTS OF VOL. II

### LXVIII

Martial law in Baltimore—Women smugglers—An arrest—The punishment and its effects—Seizure of the Maryland Club-house, as a refuge for negro women—The slave girl—The fine . . Page 686

### LXIX

Social life in Baltimore—Madame Bonaparte—The Bonaparte room—The bust of Napoleon. . . . . Page 695

### LXX

The invasion of Maryland—John W. Garrett—The situation—Hunter's movements—Washington exposed—The Shenandoah Valley—General Grant—Halleck—General Wallace leaves Baltimore for the front—Disposition of his command . . Page 698

### LXXI

The departure for Frederick—Available troops—Halleck—Colonel Clendenin—The first gun of Monocacy—Preparations for battle—Deserters from Sigel—Washington menaced . . . . Page 712

### LXXII

The troops at Frederick—Colonel Clendenin—Colonel Gilpin—The call for reinforcements—The arrival of Colonel Henry and the Tenth Vermont—Alexander's battery—Spectators of the battle—No relief from Halleck—General Tyler . . . . . Page 729

### LXXIII

The doctor's horse—Available troops—Their disposition—The two bridges—General Ricketts—The twenty-four-pounder howitzer—The fight in the cornfield—Colonel Clendenin . . . Page 748

### LXXIV

The deserting engineer—The disabled howitzer—Burning of the wooden bridge—The telegram to Grant—The cowardly brigade—The skirmishers on the iron bridge—Lieutenant Davis—The beginning of the retreat . . . . . Page 773

## CONTENTS OF VOL. II

### PART II

#### I

The retreat towards Baltimore—Clendenin's capture of the Night Hawk Rangers' flag—Burning of the block-house and supplies—The night with Ricketts—Superseded by Ord—Return to Baltimore—Grant's tribute in the *Memoirs*—Visit to Grant at City Point, September 12, 1864 . . . . . Page 799

#### II

Departure for Brazos Santiago—Letters from Vicksburg and New Orleans—Letters upon arrival—Private letters to General Grant—Conference with Ford and Slaughter—The situation in Matamoras . . . . . Page 812

#### III

Despatch to General Grant concerning Brazos—Letter to Ford and Slaughter—Propositions submitted to Kirby Smith—Letter from and reply to General Walker—Movements of Smith—Proclamation—Overtures to Maximilian—Return to Baltimore—Letter from Carvajal . . . . . Page 823

#### IV

The Lincoln commission—Members—Charge—Summing up by John A. Bingham, special judge-advocate—Execution July 7th—Charges of Father Walter—Sketches of the assassins for picture—Mrs. Surratt . . . . . Page 847

#### V

The Wirz commission—Cruelty shown by the evidence—Wirz condemned and hanged—Tedium of trial—Letters from Washington—1866—Book on tactics rejected—Romero—Presentation of battle-flags to Governor Morton, July 4, 1866 . . . Page 852

#### VI

General Sturm (from letter to Diaz)—Resignation from the army, November 4, 1865—Mexican loan—History of personal claims against Mexico—Offer of commission by Mexico—Private letters from Matamoras, Roma, etc . . . . . Page 862

## CONTENTS OF VOL. II

### VII

Private letters from Monterey, Chihuahua, etc.—Evacuation of the French—Execution of Maximilian, July 17, 1867. . . Page 877

### VIII

The completion of *The Fair God*—Crocker's letter to Messrs. Osgood & Company—Castelar, Dufferin, Dilke, Donn Piatt—Letter to Mrs. Lane—The romance relating to the Jews—Congressional Library . . . . . Page 887

### IX

Letter to the veterans of the Mexican War—"Commodus"—Letter from Lawrence Barrett—The Florida commission—Interview in the *Indianapolis Journal*—Letter to the illegal "commission" . . . . . Page 895

### X

The mission to Bolivia—Martial law in New Mexico—Disturbance quieted—Letter from Mrs. Wallace to Henry L. Wallace—Letters from General Wallace to his wife—The article in the *Youths' Companion*, "How I Came to Write *Ben-Hur*". . . Page 911

### XI

The manuscript of *Ben-Hur*—Letter from Garfield—The sales—Translations—Forgeries—Mahan—Library of St. Sophia—Page 938

### XII

Letters relating to *Ben-Hur*: Paul H. Hayne—Dufferin—W. W. Story—F. Marion Crawford—General C. P. Stone—Priest's letter . . . . . Page 947

### XIII

Friendly relations with the sultan—Release of Greek prisoners—Cleveland's election and General Wallace's resignation—Last interview with the sultan—Acceptance of a decoration—The parting gift to the sultan—*The Prince of India* . . . . Page 957

### XIV

The speech at Wingate—Address to the cadets of the Naval Academy—A second offer from the sultan declined—Offer of mission to Brazil declined—*Life of Harrison*—Dramatization of *Ben-Hur*—Conclusion . . . . . Page 990



Frank B. Culbertson.

## LEW WALLACE

### AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

#### I

Belief in Christianity—Ancestry—John Paul Jones, uncle of grandmother—Andrew Wallace, grandfather—Letters from Almira—Professor of mathematics at West Point—David Wallace—Morse telegraph and defeat for Congress—Member of Congress—Lieutenant-Governor—Governor—Judge Court of Common Pleas—Died September, 1859.

THE most that can at present be said of the work before me is that it shall be honest and untainted with cynicism. The life itself has been, on the whole, so happy, comfortable, and fortunate, that the world, meaning society and my fellow-men, seems an esteemed associate in a long journey.

In the very beginning, before distractions overtake me, I wish to say that I believe absolutely in the Christian conception of God. As far as it goes, this confession is broad and unqualified, and it ought and would be sufficient were it not that books of mine—*Ben-Hur* and *The Prince of India*—have led many persons to speculate concerning my creed. It seems best, therefore, to recognize that more is demanded of me. In doing so I will speak frankly, begging only that in thus finally disposing of the matter the reader will not judge me careless of the sanctities.

I am not a member of any church or denomination, nor have I ever been. Not that churches are objectionable to me, but simply because my freedom is enjoyable, and I do not think myself good enough to be a communicant. None the less I believe in the Divinity of Jesus Christ; and that there may be no suspicion of haggling over the word "divinity," permission is besought to quote the preface of a little volume of mine, *The Boyhood of Christ*: "Should one ask of another, or wonder in himself, why I, who am neither minister of the Gospel, nor theologian, nor churchman, have presumed to write this book, it pleases me to answer him, respectfully—I wrote it to fix an impression distinctly in my mind. Asks he for the impression thus sought to be fixed in my mind, then I would be twice happy did he content himself with this answer—The Jesus Christ in whom I believe was, in all the stages of his life, a human being. His divinity was the Spirit within him, 'and the Spirit was God.'"

Mine were folk who cared little for ancestry. The grandmother on the paternal side was the exception. A correspondent writes me of hearing her speak often and proudly of her uncle John Paul, he of the famous surname *Jones*. She was wont to take fire, also, when telling of her Virginia birth, and of being trotted on his knees by George Washington. My American readers will forgive her, I am sure, if she never forgave the British for killing one of her brothers at Brandywine.

Andrew Wallace, my grandfather, emigrated from Pennsylvania to Cincinnati, Ohio, when that city was a village in loose assemblage under the guns of a fort. Who his progenitors were, and whence they came, are now beyond my ascertainment. Though active and of a venturesome nature, he never overtook a fortune.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Probably he was of the kind so often likened to a rolling stone. Moving from Cincinnati to Brookville, Franklin County, Indiana, he brought with him his seven boys and one daughter, of whom my father, David Wallace, was the eldest. In this manner my people became identified with Indiana.

My father ran an honorable career, and, having a biography of his own, I may be excused from giving more than an outline of it in these pages.

A fortunate event befell him while a lad. Through General William Henry Harrison he obtained a cadetship at the West Point Military Academy.<sup>1</sup> Graduating in 1821, he was detailed professor of mathematics, a capacity in which he served three years. Concluding then that he had rendered a fair return for the education the government had given him, he resigned from the army.

He had his romance while wearing the gray. Among forgotten packages of letters, I find a tattered one, mailed without envelope, postmarked Norwich, Vermont. It had missed its first address and been forwarded; and to the first postage of eighteen cents was added twenty-five cents, making a heavy charge for so light a missive. The ends of the foolscap sheet are doubled and folded, sealed with a large, red wafer; the cramped handwriting is nearly illegible.

The writer tells of a composition on "Friendship" which she had received from the cadet after it had been weeks on the road. Every one to whom she has shown it wishes to know the genius who could produce anything so beautiful. She wishes she were a man, men

<sup>1</sup> General Harrison had secured the appointment for one of his own sons; but yielding to the entreaty of Andrew Wallace, he generously requested that the warrant be issued in my father's name.

can do so much that women cannot. It appears young David had also written a dream which she thought very wonderful, and she reminds him of a promise to visit her, and offers the harmless inducement of a certain custard, a delicacy she has discovered he is fond of. And if he does not come she will know he is not what she had supposed him "a shining specimen of perfection," but will be forever suspicious of every being with a brilliant exterior.

Later she goes to a lecture on the battle of Waterloo, explained by maps, and after the lecture writes:

"I am alone. I have been gazing upon the mild and peaceful moon gliding with majesty through the deep-blue expanse. It ever inclines me to sadness, more now than formerly. A pleasing contemplation I love to indulge. A feeling well expressed in the verse:

"Go, you may call it madness, folly,  
You shall not chase my gloom away.  
There's such a charm in melancholy,  
I would not, if I could be gay."

"Perhaps at this moment one I admire at West Point is gazing on the same lovely orb, perhaps in the same train of thought.

"How delightful the idea!

"Your true friend,

"ALMIRA."

Beyond this tender epistle we have no legend of the pensive Almira. She is with the other dear, dead women, merely a name. It was Rosaline, not Juliet, who dropped a rose from the balcony, and David Wallace might then have been our ideal Romeo. He was a man of noble presence in the slender elegance of youth,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

straight and tall, with a well-shaped head set squarely on his shoulders. His refined face, correct in outline, was lighted by the brightest and blackest eyes; dark, straight hair shaded a forehead white as a girl's; his smooth-shaven chin was well rounded and lips thin and sensitive.

Add to these graces a pleasant voice and manner more stately and gracious than we meet to-day; the urbane sweetness to which we give the name of high-breeding. There were fewer books then, and they were of the best, and constant familiarity with them gave a stateliness of speech and a certain dignity that comes of keeping good company. They dined with Horace and supped with Plutarch, and were scholars without knowing it.

Almost the earliest of my recollections is the gray uniform of Cadet Wallace. The small tail and shining bullet-buttons of the coat captured my childish fancy. None of the good man's after honors exalted him in my eyes like that scant garment.

He became a lawyer, and opened an office in Brookville, where he married Esther French Test, the third daughter of John Test, at one time a judge and politician of note in Indiana.<sup>1</sup>

Henry Clay was my father's ideal orator and great man; so in 1842 he launched into politics as a Whig. In 1828, 1829, and 1830, he represented Franklin County in the lower house of the Legislature. In 1831 he reached out for the Lieutenant-Governorship of the State and secured it. Re-election followed in 1834. In 1837 his party promoted him Governor. Retired in 1840, he resumed practice of the law, but next year was elected

<sup>1</sup> John Test was twice a member of Congress. Indulging in speculation, he lost much of his property, and to better pursue his profession eventually moved to Mobile, Alabama.

to Congress. In the ensuing race he was beaten.<sup>1</sup> Then, cutting loose from politics, he returned to his profession, and pursued it successfully until, in 1850, he was chosen delegate from Marion County to the Consti-

<sup>1</sup> The cause of the defeat was singular. Professor Morse had perfected his telegraph. All it needed, he said, was a long-distance trial, which he was too poor to make. As a last resort, he applied to Congress, asking an appropriation of thirty thousand dollars, barely enough to wire a connection from Washington to Baltimore. A bill was introduced and referred to a special committee of five. The member from the Indianapolis district was of the committee. A meeting was promptly held, and a vote taken, resulting in a tie, of two for and two against a favorable report. The professor meantime stretched a wire connecting the Senate and the House, and at the critical moment of action by the committee my father was off witnessing a trial of the invention. Morse made an explanation of the working of the apparatus, calling it the Electro-Magnetic-Telegraph. It may be doubted if the explanation was perfectly understood; yet the special committee-man, standing by, saw a message sent over the line, and read the message received in reply. He could not refuse the testimony of his own senses. Hastening to the session, he was barely in time. The vote had been taken by his colleagues. My father's name was called, and he answered "aye." An affirmative report followed. The House passed the bill, and the world presently received the benefit of the most wonderful discovery of the age.

Whatever the honor attached to that decisive vote, there was also a responsibility, as Congressman Wallace was soon aware. His party renominated him. To the average statesman of the present era thirty thousand dollars is a bagatelle; but the gentleman chosen to make the race by the Democrats was a wit and mimic of the first class, and he not only managed to impress his audiences with the enormity of the appropriation; in telling them what it was for, his twisting and distortion of the name "Electro-Magnetic-Telegraph" were vastly humorous and effective. In vain my father tried to explain the marvellous invention; in vain he dwelt upon its results to commerce, individuals, society, and nations; he could get nobody to understand its operation, and on that issue alone he was badly beaten at the polls.

Later, when the ocean cable was laid, Indianapolis held a great night meeting in the Governor's Circle to celebrate the event. My father was selected to make the address of the occasion, and we may believe he did so with peculiar gratification. The honor came late, but apologies are always in order.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

tutional Convention. Six years later, having become somewhat easier in circumstances, he allowed his friends to elect him Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, in which, as his biographer naïvely remarks, he “made the best record of his life.” He died suddenly September, 1859.

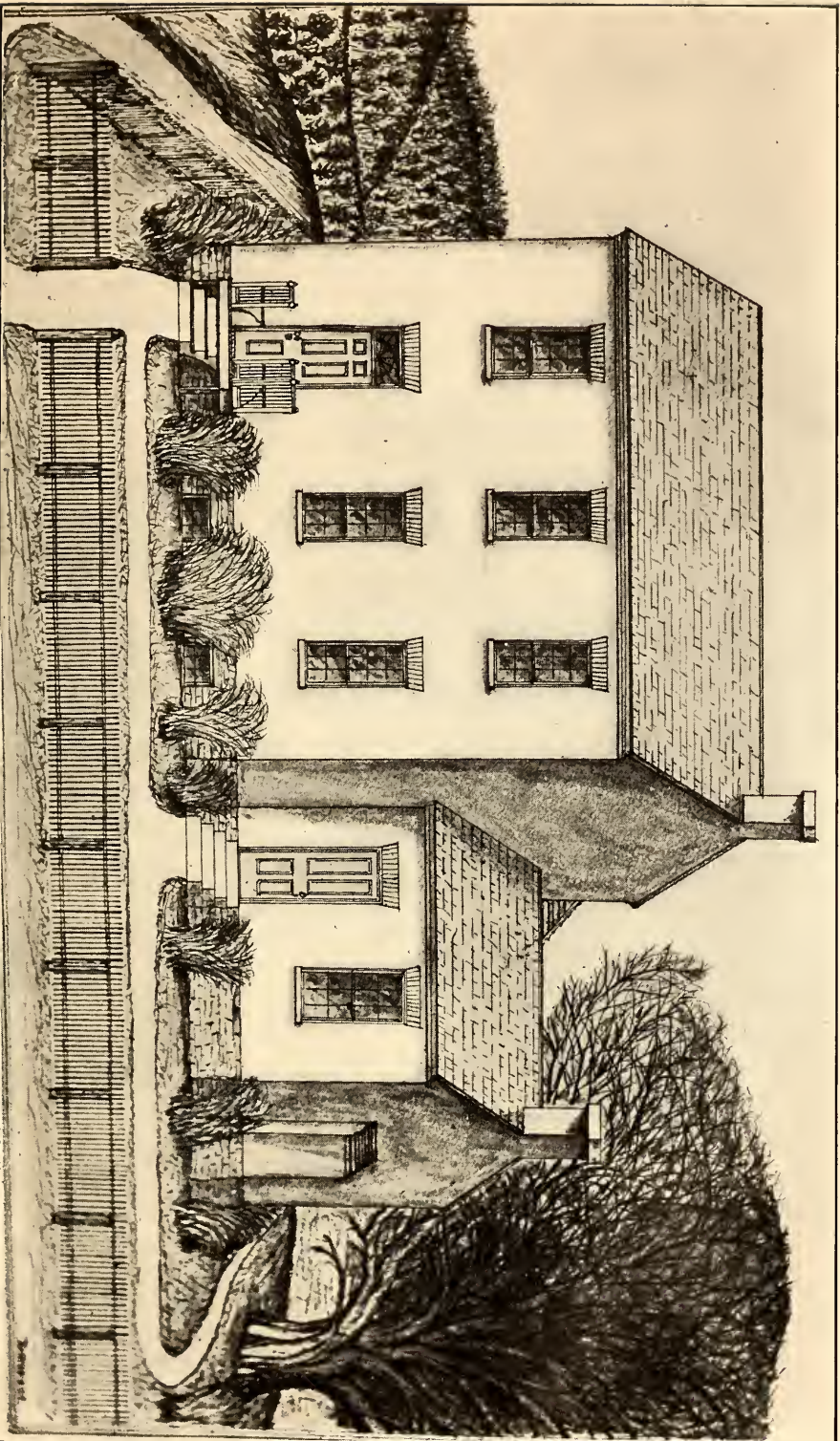
VOL. 1.—2

## II

Birthplace—Appearance—Removal to Covington—Death of brother John—Covington—Nebeker's ferry—Servant-girl's story of hanging—Fear of ghosts—The Irish school-master—Learns to draw pictures of battles—Little colonel—Black Hawk War—Review of militia by Lieutenant-Governor—Playing Scottish chiefs—Bruce's heart.

I WAS born in Brookville, Indiana, April 10, 1827, the second of four boys, of whom William was the eldest, John the third, and Edward the baby. Black eyes were common to all my mother's children, and all had black hair except me—mine was the color of tow a trifle yellowed by exposure to sun and air. My eyes, moreover, seemed to have an attraction for the hair aside from mere gravitation, insomuch that a hat was a superfluity at all seasons, and, seen through occasional openings in the thick thatch over the forehead, they had a glitter suggestive of jet in constant motion.

My days in Brookville ran through five years. They were what the Arabs would call days of ignorance. A brick house a little removed from the brow of a hill, and enclosed by split palings, is the only recollection I can now extract from the period passed in the old town—old in the New World's habit of thought and speech; and even that recollection is so very faint that, independently of friends, it would be beyond me to affirm anything of its form, dimensions, arrangement, or relative situation. The picture of the house, ventured on another page, is from a drawing kindly sent me by a lady who was often a guest within its doors.



HOUSE IN WHICH GENERAL LEW WALLACE WAS BORN, BROOKVILLE, INDIANA



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In the first summer month of 1832, my father, having become a silent partner with a brother merchandising in Covington, Indiana, removed thither, taking his family and household goods.

The journey was, of course, by horse and carriage. On reaching Indianapolis a stop was made, not so much to rest as to care for two of the party sick with scarlet-fever. My brother John and I were the patients. He, poor boy, died. Of the sickness and death I recall but two things distinctly—horrible draughts of saffron tea, hot almost to scalding, and the large, brown eyes of my mother swimming in tears.

That which was our dwelling in Covington is still standing, though shifted from its original location. It was of wood, one story, with a kitchen, and an apartment at the front that served for sitting-room, bedroom, and parlor. An attic completed the structure. The Lieutenant-Governor of the State was quite content with his new residence.

The site of the town to which we were now come was an elevated plain. A broad strip of lowland—in the vernacular, a bottom—bounded it on the south, while on the sides north, east, and west a primeval forest extended indefinitely, with an undergrowth of hazel and sumac dense as a Rio Grande chaparral.

The thornless thickets were somewhat awesome, owing to one telling me that the dye the sumac took on ripening was the blood of Indian children. Nevertheless, a little girl friend and I used to scour them far and near, gathering apronfuls of the brilliant leaves. What wreaths and chaplets they made when dexterously pinned together with thorns!

The Wabash skirted the low ground mentioned, swishing the limb-tips of the trees on both shores. I do not remember how I made the acquaintance of the

river, but as my sixth year was the beginning of a habit of truancy which followed me through my school terms, and has even yet to be struggled against, it may be presumed that I ran away to see it, and that nobody was with me.

Since that time I have seen many of the famous rivers of the earth, among them the Danube, the Rhine, and the Nile; never one of them so impressed me as did the Wabash in that stolen interview. It looked so wide, so deep, so like the passing of a flood going down in its own majestic way to what would be a deluge when it was at last arrived. Yet it had a coaxing power. My fears were soothed, and I went and, as it were, laid my hand on its mane; and thence we were friends. No one better than Dickens knew what conjurers such things are to imaginative children. I became its playmate the summers through.

A man named Nebeker owned and plied a ferry in those days. The employment was lonesome, and he welcomed me for my company. On the farther side, chained to a tree, he kept a long, tin horn. A traveller, coming to the bank and finding us on the townward side, blew to get our attention. I say *us*. The good man swung an oar to the boat suitable to my muscular degree, and in the day, asking only time for breakfast, I was at my post whether it rained or shone. He shared his dinner with me, nor asked where my hat and coat were. Generally I was without either. In the intervals when there was no demand on us I fished for minnows or proudly watched his lines. But most I loved to lean over the low gunwale on the shadow's side and look down into the waters; they seemed so mysterious and moved with such silent power. Whence did they come? And whither were they hastening? They were friendly, and of themselves taught a wholesome dread of what

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

might come of too great familiarity. So it happened that, what with my own caution and the watchfulness of my human friend, I was really in no danger. Then, when the voice of the big horn on the thither side called to us— How it startled me! What music there was in it! What haste I made to unship my oar! How I bent to it, and strove, imagining that but for me we would be pulled down by the current and never reach shore.

And those at home, especially my mother! The days were days of suspense with her. She came to know where I was to be found, and, in my father's absences, followed after me. Finally she made a treaty with the ferryman, and, assured of my safety when with him, left me to my pleasure. And if since then I have been an ardent fisherman, believing with my friend Maurice Thompson that

“Halcyon prophecies come to pass  
In the haunts of the bream and bass”;

and if the song of Butler, the soldier-poet of Kentucky—

“Oh, boatman, wind that horn again!  
For never did the joyous air  
Upon its lambent bosom bear  
So wild, so soft, so sweet a strain”—

is still a favorite of mine, with power to stir my pulses and return me to a freak of childhood full of joyousness alloyed only with thought of my mother's fears, the shrewd reader will know at once how such tastes inured to me. And as swimming seems to have been one of my natural accomplishments, I must have acquired it during my days at the ferry.

In the description of the site of Covington I should have mentioned the wide hollow on the east, the pur-



pose of which seems to have been the accommodation of a small "branch" wending towards the river. The hollow is worth mention, since it was there I came by another impression of long duration.

A man had been convicted of murder in the Fountain Circuit Court, and hung, and when my father arrived at his new place of abode the four posts of the platform of the scaffold were standing a little to the left of the road descending to the branch. They were pointed out to me, with a full account of the hanging and the crime. The narrator was an ignorant servant-girl who had been present at the scene. She omitted nothing likely to affect me as she had been affected by it. She led me to see the crowd in attendance. She described minutely the handling of the cord, and the tying it under the left ear by a certain cunning knot known only to officiating sheriffs. The cord, she carefully informed me, had been procured in Kentucky for the special purpose. For a long time the idea clung to me that the manufacture of such ropes was one of the chief industries of that state. She described the appearance of the murderer on the scaffold, and how the sheriff had smothered his protestation of innocence by dropping a black cap over his head, buckling it under the chin. She spoke of the awful silence of the multitude at that moment, broken at last by the crash of the trap in its dropping. She led me to imagine the convulsions and the twisting and swaying of the body, and the doctors pulsing the man, watches in hand, and solemnly announcing him dead. Then followed the rush of the crowd to secure pieces of the rope. These circumstances were all bad enough, but the master-stroke of the story-teller did the work on which she was intent. On moonlight nights, she said, particularly of moonlight nights in winter, the season of the hanging, the ghost of the murderer re-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

visited the place of the taking-off, and perched itself on one or other of the posts of the platform, awaking the echoes of the hollow with groans. She said a number of respectable people had seen the spirit and heard the blood-curdling noises. To relieve me of doubt, had I been equal to one, she gave me the names of some of them, adding that they all believed the man innocent. So argumentative had the narrator been that it was impossible for me not to believe in ghosts. The faith continued with me so vividly that in passing graveyards alone even in daytime I took to my heels, and with such advantage that if I did not see any of the sheeted tenantry it was because I outflew the very sight of them.

This year—the sixth—was memorable to me as the commencement of my school life. A small brick house, with two windows to a side, the door to the west, the north side of the room given up to the teacher and his table and a bunch of selected *rods*, the latter hanging from the wall in plain view, such was the academy to which my mother took me.

The master was an Irishman—exactly what that meant I do not know—an Irishman, yellow-haired, freckle-faced, stout, with whom flogging was a fine art which he seemed fearful of losing. Lest such a calamity should overtake him, he kept his hand in on the big boys. Should one think the description too finely drawn for a lad so young and untrained, with a memory so callow as mine was, he is politely reminded of what a terror the man was to me, and that now and then he made a playground for his practice of my back. With him lying and thieving were trifles light as air compared with truancy. Thus early was I made acquainted with the rod.

I pause to say, with blessings on her dear head, that my mother had in some way found time to teach me

the alphabet and spelling in double syllables, and to make letters in capitals.

My elder brother and I were delivered over together to the sanguinary professor. Our respective outfits were a Webster's spelling-book, a paper slate, and a bluestone pencil. Before the first day was over a little girl ate my pencil, and I took my first flogging because I could not produce it. Yet it was a day of triumph. I was put into a line with children of my class to spell. We were given the word "ba-ker." I rendered it correctly, and went up head. The honor was short-lived, however, for next day I was overtaken with a lapse of application remarkable for its continuance.

Ere that red-letter day was done I made two discoveries of great interest. The first one was that I could draw a portrait in profile or full-face. Thereafter I was kept busy. My small mates must have their pictures; for which they brought me white paper and pencils of hammered lead. Unfortunately this pursuit, in rivalry with the boy Di Bondone<sup>1</sup>—of course, I knew nothing of him then—was so fascinating that it occupied me, and I grew indifferent alike to the main object of my attendance at school and the bundle of rods on the wall. This first dash of education began in the winter; directly with the outbursting of spring I renewed the co-partnership with the more genial Nebeker down at the ferry, and played at it with delighted obstinacy.

The second discovery was of a very different taste. About that time—at least, while my first school engagement lasted—the Black Hawk War was in occurrence, and a company of horsemen formed in Covington to go out after the ferocious chief. The excitement ran high,

<sup>1</sup> A careful consideration gives this reference a smack of vanity. It was not so intended, and I humbly pray pardon. Besides which, Giotto has been dead nearly seven hundred years.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and culminated the day the volunteers packed their saddle-bags with crackers and cheese, swung their fire-arms to their backs, and in files of two rode away amid the tears of wives and mothers. There was no school, to be sure, while that scene was enacting, and I saw it all, and was filled with it. Thereafter my hours in the contracted academy were divided between making pictures and fighting battles on my paper slate. The manner of the latter suggests a reproduction of two of the countless sketches I made—one of the idea in its first crude state, the other of the idea in evolution.



The point in the first instance was to crowd the field with men—the more the better. Every battle was to



be a great battle. How could the multitude be given except by straight marks in processions, making the slaughter of thousands in an hour impossible? So, slaughter being the main object, some other method must be practised in actual war. But what? I pothered my brains daily through many sessions of the school over the problem. At last—O happy moment!—at last I saw it. Then, instead of processions, I brought my forces into lines confronting each other; whereupon every battle became truly great and awful. Flags, smoke, hills, hollows, fighters, runaways, dead men, everything of battle, in fact, except artillery and cavalry, for which I had no room, were accessories, allowing infinite variety in the composition. Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon, Genghis Khan, and Tamerlane the limp-legged, were heroes in reserve, as it were; yet none of them—no, not all of them together—slew half the number of men I wiped from my fields of carnage in course of a week with dashes of the ready sponge.

Just now the reader may not see why I dwell upon the newly discovered taste. Perhaps the word is not exactly descriptive, yet it will suffice if understood as meaning an interest in a pastime which was to grow into a passion. In the next place, by dwelling a trifle more upon the incipient passion I may succeed in entertaining young folk, if not in catering to a faith seldom wanting in adults of a philosophic turn—that the characteristics of the man have their outcropping in the child.

Wherefore I proceed to say that in the spring following my entry at school another affair occurred tending further to deepen the impression graven in my memory by the departure of the volunteers bent on bringing the noble Indian back to duty. Early one morning my



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

attention was challenged by seeing my father's horse brought to the gate bedight in gay trappings, the details of which I cannot now specify. The effect, however, was stunning. After thorough inspection the good steed was led away to be brought back later.

The public square, when I reached it after breakfast, was fast filling with people from the out-towns and country, and I had only to look at their attire to know that something warlike was at hand. It will not do for me to say they were in uniform. Their coats were bedizened with cotton cords and tape in various forms and hues. Such of their hats as were not of straw, homemade and in slouch, were adorned with rosettes and cockades. Now and then a plume of great height, made of white feathers, ruffled, and tipped with the choicest furnishment of red roosters, complemented tall hats of the bell-crown type. A few swords were in place, and yet more rarely an individual strode by sashed and epauletted—that is, he wore one epaulet—and a streak of red wrapped his waist. Sometimes I shuddered to see a musket; though, as a rule, the martial apparitions were armed with umbrellas, corn-stalks, and hickory staves. The sky above them seemed tremulous with the thunder of bass-drums; and, what was most curious to me, these monsters drew to them men with lesser drums and instruments which I came to know as fifes.

After dinner a cavalcade in diverse uniforms, some with immense hats half-moon in form and gorgeously plumed, trotted to our gate. My father went out to them, himself in blue frock-coat, brass buttons, sash, and hat of the same half-moon style, mounted with a white silk cockade. There was an animated consultation, then they all rode down-town together, and I was

too overcome with awe to follow them, except at a more than respectful distance.

In the description I make use of the names of things drawn from later experience.

Afar off I saw the crowd form and march away in leading of the big-hatted horsemen and the thunderous drums. They took the road to the river-bottom, and over their heads in the going I saw for the first time the flutter and stream of colors, or, more simply, the flag which was to become better known to me as "Old Glory."

In a razzle-dazzle — as a definition in brief of my mental condition, the term is so apt that I will not apologize for borrowing it from "Pinafore"—I stole down to a secure ambush of ironweeds on the hill-side, and watched the militia of the county in regimental drill, Colonel (Lieutenant-Governor) Wallace commanding. They would wheel into column—again I resort to my after-experience—and ploy and deploy, and change front, and, maugre the canes, corn-stalks, and umbrellas, the ignorance of captains and the deficiencies of guides, I do not hesitate to say that to the dazed reviewer in the ironweeds on the hill-side nothing of military circumstances half so splendid and inspiring had ever taken place.

At last the regiment halted and wheeled into line, and, after placement of the guides and colors, the colonel marched it forward. When next halted it was in easy range below and facing me. The colonel galloped to the rear, and gave commands in a loud voice. The men with muskets and those without muskets obeyed with equal alacrity. Coming to a ready, they aimed up the hill. A word rang out—there was a ragged volley—and the subsequent proceedings interested me no more. In plainer speech, I

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sprang from my hiding and ran. Up the height and through the town I ran, and not until safely home was I entirely sure that my performance had been in the flesh.

By-and-by I got my little courage back and betook myself to the public square again. The parade was over and the crowd dispersed. Only the drinkers and bass-drums remained. The fighting was on. A spectacle of the kind fell to me. As I passed through the gateway two men took to quarrelling. There was a rush, and I mounted the fence to see the fray. One of the combatants was a small man in uniform. His want of stature was more than compensated by a willing spirit and a tall, bell-crowned hat surcharged by a taller plume of white and red chicken feathers. The enemy, judged by his attire, was an every-day citizen, large, brawny, and unheroic-looking. I wondered at his temerity. *He fight a soldier—a soldier* whose business was to kill! Had he no friends to take him away? They made at each other—a moment, and he in uniform went down, and the crowd massed in around the belligerents, one of whom was presently carried out. I followed—and, lo! it was the soldier. The buttons on his braided coat shone dimly through a besmearing of mud—gone were the hat and supereminent plume—gone was my faith in the invincibility of men of war as such. When night came, and my mother tucked me in the little trundle-bed with my elder brother, I had gained such store of wisdom pertaining to war that it passed into my dreams, and from them into my life; so I promised myself, saying many times, “Wait until I am a man.” The discomfiture of the soldier was without moral to me; only in my battle pictures thereafter I peppered my lines and columns with horses and riders hatted and plumed like these:



In time I came to great pride in my horses, and would have none not in action. A hero flourishing a sword on a tame steed was too ludicrous.

It should not be supposed that I made no progress in school. The freckled Irishman taught me to read. It was a day never to be forgotten when I could stand before the school and, without pause or break, deliver the thrilling story of the bad boy in the apple-tree. Thence the step to a book was short.

My first book! Ah, how distinctly it comes to me through the years! One of Peter Parley's. A Yankee lad ran away and went to sea, and in the Mediterranean was taken, ship and all, by Algerines. But he escaped. The vessel lay close under the guns of a fort. The prisoners were to be sold for slaves next morning. A shipmate, looking through a port, saw a small boat loose on the water. The squeeze through the port was trying, but they made it and the small boat. By good luck, the oars were there ready. Better still, the pirates kept no watch. The two rowed to sea, and, after suffering hunger and thirst, were picked up by Christians. How it made me shiver, that crisis when the lad, afraid to drop, hung to the edge of the narrow window, thinking of home and mother, and muttering the prayer she had taught him. Then the dark water closing over him— Goodness! Would he rise? Could he swim? I



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

got the tale nearly by heart. The craving it awoke is not yet satisfied.

My mother, meantime, made discovery that to keep me in bounds there was nothing like a book. So she bethought her of a long, good one—*The Scottish Chiefs*.

I was a slow reader, and Miss Porter's pages lacked the charming simplicity of Mr. Goodrich's. There was halting and stumbling at first; the broad Scotch proper names refused to be spelled; but at length I reached the current of the story, and when it dawned upon me that it was about a man who was actually named after my brother William—it did not occur to me that my brother could have been named after him—astonishment and delight came to the help of my understanding, and bore it up and on as in the Arabian Nights friendly genii were wont to carry distressed princes through the air. Then my brother read the wondrous tale, and we debated it early and late. We cried over its sorrowful passages, trembled while the battles were in progress, and were genuine Scots whether the victory were for or against us, especially when the sword and directing genius of our mighty kinsman were in the least conspicuous. That he was our kinsman we had no doubt.

Was such pleasure to be bottled up for us alone? We called in our chums, one Robert Evans, and two others, Henderson Rawles and Wesley Harper.<sup>1</sup> The five read the heroic chronicles together; whereupon we turned them into a play. Each took a character. On account of his name my brother's right to the rôle of Sir William was admitted. Evans took Robert Bruce; Rawles and Harper had their parts; and I was given the rôle of the youthful brother of the love-lorn Helen Mar. Then, in

<sup>1</sup> Robert Evans served as a captain in the regiment to which I belonged in the war with Mexico. Rawles died in early childhood. Harper lives in Cincinnati, a most worthy and respected citizen.



deadliest earnest, we went to war with the haughty English. We made helmets of pasteboard and swords of seasoned clapboards. The young hazel-shoots we wove into shields. Our steeds we found ready in the bottom, and that they were of ironweeds did not detract from their fitness. Under us they had the endurance of Arabs and the strength of the big Flemings so affected by knights who ate, drank, and slept in steel. Neither did we see any inconsistency in converting the same weeds into lances. Thus armed and panoplied we ranged the country round. Woe to the elder, the mullen, and the white-crowned lobelias. Woe particularly to the wild sunflower cropping myriadly in the dry hollows under the trees along the river-bank. A vigorous growth of fruiting pokeberries was an enemy to be dealt with in single combat. The sword was then the preferred weapon. Out rode Sir William or the Bruce, and they always came back victorious, their blades dyed to the hilt, their shields dripping with gore.

The campaigns were necessarily fast and furious. Their seasons were short, generally about eight hours; this for a reason that will be keenly appreciated by every fully vitalized boy. If (beginning at nine o'clock morning) we were not at home by five in the evening, our mothers would be looking for us; and I am forced to admit that in instances there were preventive means resorted to by them in large denial of the dignities assumed by the heroes of Bannockburn and the bridge over the Forth. Nor would it be fair to suppose us wholly without tactical sense in our operations. When we came upon the enemy in force—and every weed, it must be remembered, was an Englishman—we held council how best to attack, the object being extermination. Did we resolve upon a charge in mass, we began by discharging our lances from a distance; then, tossing

the bridle-reins over head, and advancing shields, we drew swords and rushed in pell-mell. The cries with which we rang the scene were not vulgar yells or even the "Hurrahs" traditional with all Saxons. We dealt in *slogans*—A Bruce! A Wallace! A Douglas!

Probably our most effective play was a rendition of the melancholy story of the heart of Bruce. The monarch was supposed to be recently dead. We took the member which had throbbed for Scotland through so many years of ennobled struggle and put it reverently in a silver case, to be borne to Palestine and laid on the Holy Sepulchre; that is, we secured a tin can of suitable size, and, loading it with sand, put a burnish upon its outside. The mission of the Black Douglas was regarded as so highly honorable that we took turns at its performance, and it never happened that he and his train failed in becomingly simulating sorrow. The first close patch of sunflowers reached in the pilgrimage was the signal that we had arrived in Spain and that the detested Moors were in our front. Then Douglas cried, "Charge!" In the heat of combat, to arouse us to nobler effort, he would snatch the silver case from his neck and fling it far into the ranks of the infidels.

Sad to say, however, we at last lost the heart. This was the way of it: My brother one day essayed the part of Douglas. We found the Moors in the bend above the town under a grove of sturdy water-maples and ghostly sycamores. Nothing daunted by their numbers, our leader flung the sacred relic and called on us to follow him. Our valor quite equalled the havoc we wrought. The sunflowers strewed the ground. We were winning a splendid victory. We sent our slogans to the echoes a mile away. Suddenly a great growl arose before us. Sword arms hung suspended; the steeds stopped their ramping. We had not time to

## LEW WALLACE

ask what now. Out of the thicket rushed the mother of a litter of half-grown pigs. The bristles on her back were long as the pins on a Georgia conifer, and they all stood erect. Right at us she dashed. And we—well, we forgot our knightly vows, our battle passion, the mission on which we were bent, the silver case intrusted to us by the redeemed people of Scotland; we forgot our swords and shields, and, leaving our trained steeds each to his own care, we ran. Presently the world, had it taste for a bit of genuine fun, might have seen the Black Douglas and all his peerless chivalry of Scone high on the limbs of trees and wondering when the ferocious enemy would raise the siege. We reached home by the directest path, but never returned for the heart of Bruce. Doubtless the next freshet buried it under the shifting silt.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bruce was under vow to betake himself to the Holy Sepulchre. Finding he could not accomplish the purpose in person, he requested Douglas, his favorite knight, to carry the heart there; but the noble delegate was slain in Spain, fighting the Moors. Another faithful Scot (Sir William Keith) recovered the sacred relic and it was buried at Melrose.

# AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

## III

A woman teacher—Studies geography—Truancy—Autumn and winter—Advent of stove—The circus—Servant-girl's superstition—Illness of mother—Death and burial—Mrs. John Hawkins.

MEANTIME my education was advancing. The Irishman disappeared; whither, Heaven at least knew, although I cannot persuade myself that it was in that direction. There was jubilation among the lads and lasses of the town. My joy was surpassing; not more from the brute's dismissal than because I could look forward to a breathing-time in which my back would have a chance to resume its normal condition.

When the door of the little red school-house on the brow of the eastern hill next opened, and we of the generation to be instructed filed in to our backless benches, lo! a woman was in the master's chair. Who was she? And whence descended? The installation was new to the biggest boy. A woman! Submission to a woman! Could we bring our manhood to *that*? So the others thought and talked; but I took a look at her to make sure of the fact, and then another look at the wall above her table. *The rods were gone!* Through the cloud of unasked questions which blew over me, like smoke from a discharged gun, vaguely but positively I felt that the change of dynasty meant a change of government. Something was to take the place of the rods. What could it be? And I waited. Time has ships always coming in laden with revelations.

The new teacher put two new books into my hand—



an elementary arithmetic and an Olney's Geography. The first had a dismal look about it. Further investigation satisfied me that it and I could never be friends. I say *never*, and so it has proved. The other book captivated me at once. Turning its leaves, I was arrested by a display of maps and pictures. The horizon, theretofore bounding the village and its vicinity, seemed to undergo a swift and vast extension. I caught glimpses of other countries and peoples. The sea teemed with islands, and actually there were rivers larger than the Wabash. Most marvellous — incredible — impossible — the earth was round, like an apple. To catch a boy and hold him fast one has only to set the delicate machinery of the wonder-box in him at work. The suggestion is respectfully submitted to teachers. Mothers, with better understanding, practise it when lullabies fail. At all events, I became interested in the study, and to such a degree that through the years intervening nothing pertaining to geography has been allowed to escape me. With Columbus and Magellan, La Pérouse, Cook, and Perry I still sail and sail. In more modern times, I volunteer under Franklin and Kane, and ingratiate myself hail-fellow-well-met with Livingstone and Stanley. The increase of knowledge due to their heroism has been practically an enlargement of the world; yet—I go back to the repetition knowingly—none of their discoveries has been so wonderful to me, so hard to reconcile with appearances, so defiant of problematic solution, as that the earth is not flat, like a pancake.

One of the wonders of childhood I have never seen satisfactorily explained is the greater length of the divisions of time in passage. A day then was like a month now, a summer like a lifetime in fulness. And those summers! There was not a minute of them between sunrise and sunset which I did not devote to



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

physical delights of some kind. So eager was I to be doing something with hands and feet—walking, running, swimming, hunting, exploring, playing—that shoes and hat and coat were alike abominations. Breakfast over, I was off for the day. If dinners had grown on the trees like bread-fruit in some of the Pacific islands, and the getting them had required the abandonment of an amusement, though for a time barely enough to pluck and eat them, they might as well not have been. Hunger did not seem to exhaust me, or rather in my mid-going I never thought of food. Malaria, the curse of the beautiful new country, attacked without stopping me. The rigor and the fever often struck me in the woods or water; I took them as matters of course and went on.

It would be unjust to my parents to suppose they made no effort to control me. The rod in my father's hand was terrible for the moment. The punishments resorted to by my mother were annoying. Sometimes she tied me to a bedpost. Dressing me in a woman's frock or petticoat shut me in quite effectively. More potent were her entreaties and tears. The contrition they brought about lasted until the vitality which was the unconquerable part of my nature drove me to going again. It seemed that I must go. The Wandering Jew was not more possessed in that way; only his possession was a curse, and mine the completest happiness. Going was life.

Why this, now that I am in my sixty-ninth year? Certainly not because it appears peculiar or commendable. There are thousands of lads similarly overstocked with vitality; so much so that restraints of self or by others are impossible. I do not mean to say that in such cases the object of solicitude should be allowed to run wild. I simply plead for discrimination,

for forbearance, for teaching, for sympathy. Whoso lays his hand heavily on a boy of spirit such as I am describing is himself an offender in far greater degree than his victim. The school-master who cannot discriminate between pupils lacks the first essential to perfection in an honorable calling.

Autumn, it is to be added, was but an extension of summer a little sobered, and different in that things ceased growing that they might ripen—a difference I saw and felt without understanding. I speak altogether of wild things—richnesses with which men had nothing to do. Who better than I knew where to look for the fattest hazel and hickory nuts, chincapins the least acrid, grapes in largest cluster, pawpaws the most melting? And were they not mine? Had I not been first to see them? And in their passing from bloom to form and color, had I not been their most faithful watcher? And, with the birds and chipmunks, had I not counted on gathering them? And when at last they were ready for gathering, and I went out after them, the shimmering of the summer having given place to smoky mists of the melancholy days—went out after them with my mother's big reticule on my shoulder—if, then, the owner of the land had bidden me off, with what a rebellious spirit I had submitted to his larger hand, if I had submitted at all? What did I know of the moral and the law incident to right in property? And not knowing, what did I care? Every boy is originally a red communist.

But alas for me when winter came and the universal green had vanished, and the snow lay over my haunts and even the river yielded itself to bonds hateful and icy! *That* was an end of going. And, in recognition of the distasteful fact, I submitted to hat, shoes, and coat, and became an *habitué* of the red school-house on the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

hill. There my penmanship improved. I could copy a copy with an identicalness really wonderful considering that we are bound to the use of quills not always clarified. True, the multiplication table continued a rough corduroy over a swamp of bottomless depth; yet my maps were unexcelled. In fact, had the one crowded room of the small building been better furnished, my progress might have been more satisfactory. As it was, in periods extremely cold, a struggle began with us the moment we were rapped to order. The fireplace was ample and wood in plenty, but the floors and windows were open; they and the big boys and girls monopolized the warmth. In the rush for the fire at recess, the small children were shut out unanimously. The wall of writhing bodies that cut them off could not be climbed, while the process of tunnelling under was dangerous. Study requires favorable conditions. It may be questioned if the author of *Vathek* could have finished his marvellous story in the prescribed time if compelled to pause between sentences to blow the blood back in his frosting fingers. It is also beyond belief that *Nuova Vita* could have been conceived while zero was nibbling at Dante's toes.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I remember yet the wonder which fell upon the school and held it when, without notice, a party of men entered the room one bitter cold day and set a large iron box tenderly upon the floor; then fixed legs to it, and, after knocking a hole in the chimney above the fireplace, put up a long line of iron pipes in connection. Of all the urchin eyes watching the operation not one lost a motion while their rough but gentle friends kindled a fire in the box. And then, when the draught began to sing, and presently the warmth intensified and pervaded from the centre to the corners, and we *all alike* felt the summery effect, if the inventor of stoves had been of a nature purely Samaritan and conscious of silent blessings in the air about him that moment, doubloons in showers fresh from the Spanish mints had not been more to his satisfaction. It was my first encounter with a stove.



## LEW WALLACE

In the foregoing paragraph, I perceive, upon second reading, room for a suspicion that I was capable of a studious habit. The truth is, a reading was the utmost a lesson had from me in that early day, and for a long time after. To be still, much less buckle seriously to a school-book, was greatly beyond my will. The reader may smile, thinking of the old witticism of sitting on a dictionary to acquire a language; still, there is such a thing as absorption of knowledge, a point on which I offer myself in testimony. If the task were to my taste, or one that called for work with hand, eye, and thought in combination, my patience was inexhaustible. The difference between work with pleasure at the bottom of it and downright mental effort to master the abstruse, difficult, or uninteresting is within the personal experience of everybody.

In either my sixth or seventh year I was introduced to what may be called the amusement department of society. I laughed then, and laugh now, only a trifle more quietly.

The servant-girl who, in connection with the hanging of the murderer on the roadside down in the hollow east of the town, gave me my first chapter on ghosts was permitted to take me and my elder brother to a circus. She was really an accomplished cicerone for such an occasion. All the folk-lore of a settlement hardly to be dignified as provincial was at her tongue's end. She knew the rhymes and songs, the tales and superstitions, the homely words and cabalistic formulas of witchcraft and magic so largely composing the intelligence of the ignorant class to which she belonged. She read fortunes with singular facility, and, being yet unadvanced to palmistry and cards, her bases were most elementary — such as the grounds in a teacup, marks in the ashes, the seeds of an apple. She delighted in



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

death-heraldry. If a dog, abroad by moonlight, stopped before the door or under a window and howled, or if a whippoorwill dropped its mournful note while on the wing above the house at night, she knew some one was doomed, or, in her style, "was agoin' to die for certain." She not only knew the names of the spooks and fairies, but had seen them, and, to hear and believe her, there was a personal devil, and everybody his game. I was her favorite auditor; probably because my imagination was more easily played upon. The times she sent me shivering to bed or to my mother, white and trembling, it were unsafe to tell. The circus referred to gave her an opportunity to manifest her curious knowledge. Through the whole preceding week she had me looking for four-leaf clovers. She would tell me why after the show. I could not find the clover, so she was safe in the divulgement. The riding and tumbling had most profoundly astonished me. "Ah," she said, with an airy toss of her frowsy head, "them wasn't men you seen. You only thought them men. If you'd 'a' had a four-leafed clover in the toe of your shoe, you'd 'a' seen that they was speerits." In this manner, strange to say, I was furnished a lesson in hypnotism long before Robert Houdin advanced the occult principle in explanation of tricks played before his eyes by the fakirs of the East.

My next glimpse at amusements was quite as entertaining. A solitary showman, making a tour of the West, gave a performance in the court-house. The first part of the programme was a dance on a slack wire. In place of dancing, the "talent" confined himself to a slow walk forward and back, and, to reduce the danger to a minimum in case he lost his balance, the floor was at no time more than three inches beneath his chalked slippers. The audience clapped vigorously; while with me the shortcomings in the exhibition, admitting them

to have occurred, were offset by the black hose, spangled shirt, and starred crown of the exhibitor. The glory of Solomon, of which I afterwards heard, was shoddy in comparison. The second part of the programme aroused the entertained, myself included, to a white heat of enthusiasm. It was made up entirely of plantation songs and jigs, executed in costume—burned cork, shovel shoes, and all. Two of the songs I yet remember—"Jump, Jim Crow" and "The Blue-tailed Fly." The chorus rang through my head for years; and as I walked home through the night I was unconscious of any special increase of wisdom; at the same time, I felt that the world was full of fun and life worth living, if only for fun. I had an inexpressible joy thinking of what all there was before me.

My mother, the Esther French Test already mentioned, died in her twenty-seventh year, leaving me so young that her sweet motherliness is a clearer impression on my mind than either her qualities or her appearance. Of the latter, all I can now recall are her eyes, large, sparkling, and deeply brown. They follow me yet. Indeed, through my seventy years there has never been a day so bright or a night so dark that, upon recurrence of the thought of them, I have been unable to see them seeing me.

A rejected suitor has helped me to knowledge of her in her young womanhood. Sprightliness, beauty, and graces of person, he said, brought her beaux in numbers. She was an instance, he further observed, in which coquetry added to a character altogether perfect. He spoke of her as the strangest compound he ever met. Though delicate to frailty, she could dance from Sunday to Sunday. A Methodist, charitable as a Sister of Mercy, devout as a Puritan, the enjoyment she found in the party and the ball, in visitation and in society,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

were irrepressible. I may remark that at the time he was speaking the suitor was old and semi-paralytic; still, he made it clear to me that the subject of his speech was the unforgotten brightest light on the receding hill-top of his youth.

The decline in health was rapid, so rapid as to justify the homely entitlement of the disease, galloping consumption. Yet her eyes grew brighter and dwelt upon her boys with a gaze longer and more intense. Now I know why. She was thinking of the inevitable separation. My father was in New York on business, and dreamless of what was to occur. The sufferer wanted nothing possible to be had. One night I lay asleep before the fire upon a rug which I affected on account of the great Persian lion woven in it. One of the women in attendance shook me, saying, "Wake up—your mother is dying; come and see her." My elder brother was already at the bedside, crying bitterly. He knew the meaning of what was passing; I did not. In dull apprehension I joined him. The alabaster tinge was on her face. In the eyes there was no light. The hands and tongue had lost their affectionate cunning. I called her, using the endearment that had never before failed—"Mother, mother!" She did not answer, and then I understood the silence. The comprehension fell upon me as darkness leaps in on the blowing-out of the last light, and it seemed a strong hand caught my heart and tried to wring the life out of it. And so I made acquaintance with death. I have seen it since in many forms, at times under circumstances hideous because of its accessories—in flood, in pestilence, in battle—but never realized its awful import, due, as I can now perceive, to an intuitive perception of the extent of the bereavement it so remorselessly inflicted on me. She was to be buried. I was never to see her more. Her

## LEW WALLACE

love, with all its countless illustrations of touch, look, care, sympathy, and word, was to become but a memory. In my defeats, how often I have said to myself, "Ah, if she were here to console me!" in triumphs, "How proud and happy she would be!"

When the final services were over, a neighbor led the three of us to her house and there installed us. Not to mention her name were to prove me an ingrate. She was Mrs. John Hawkins. It often happens that women, themselves indifferent to the world and its applause, come to enviable places in it through their children. Such was her case. The mother of Mrs. General Edward S. Canby and General John Hawkins still has a generous share in the respect universally accorded them by their contemporaries. We became of her family. The government she laid down for her own children was extended to us, and in the largeness of her charity there was never an observable distinction.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### IV

Goes to College—"Nuts"—Mother's apparition to William—Empty house—David Wallace—Runs off to Crawfordsville—Wabash College—First appearance as student—The seminary—Reverend H——t—The Kerrs—The farm—The new mother.

My boyhood, as a subject of reflection, furnishes me now with so much quiet amusement that I am tempted to give it a chapter. To do so ingenuously requires a somewhat trying exposure. Indeed, I much doubt if I had been equal to the trial twenty years ago. To be able to laugh at himself is pretty good evidence that one has reached the philosophic stage of life; to invite others to join him in the laugh is a final test conclusive of the fact.

The utter carelessness which was my most marked trait in childhood underwent no change in consequence of the loss of my mother. I possessed an animal enjoyment of existence so pure and deep that it was an absolute governor. Where the faculty of reflection is wanting, advice goes the way of spilled wine, and punishment is cruelty. Two years more went by in Covington, and, though supposedly given to school, the summers were really spent in the woods and along the river, and the winters in sledding and trapping birds. Out on the road one day I was assailed by the cries of a dog in pain. Hurrying to the scene, I found a small, half-starved, flea-bitten sample of the species that had been run over by a wagon and deserted. Examination disclosed a broken leg. I took the sufferer in my arms and carried it home.

My best surgical care could not save the limb from a crook and its owner from a limp which, while seriously affecting its speed, did not in the least diminish its gratitude and devotion. "Nuts"—the new christening—was in good time promoted chief associate in my truanacies. In an attempt to defend him against the boys at school I had my first fight. The cause was righteous and I did my best, but they were too many for me, and truth compels the admission that I was whipped. Retreating with a wad of hair wrenched from the head of an enemy, I soothed my hurts by disentangling the trophy and tying it conspicuously to my dog's collar.

Circumstances certainly do alter cases. My elder brother had long played on my fear of ghosts. He did not believe in them. At length I turned the tables on him. Upon my mother's final departure, the house had been closed and left locked up and grewsofely silent, but with everything in place within. One day he wanted something in the front room. Taking the youngest of the Hawkins boys with him, he pried up a back window, and the two crawled into the kitchen, leaving me outside waiting their return. Presently they came rushing back. Both were white with terror. Not standing on order, they swung themselves over the sill to the ground, where they stopped long enough for me to ask the matter. My brother answered: "We saw mother. She was sitting in the rocking-chair." "Did she speak to you?" I asked. "No, she only looked at me. Come away." And they ran off, forgetting in their haste to let the sash down. Somehow I did not scare. A graveyard was too much for me, but not *that* ghost; so I swung myself into the window and ran through the whole house, looking everywhere. Nothing strange was to be seen. Thinking if she had, indeed, returned she

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

might speak to me, I took seat in the rocking-chair, but without reward. Out of the stillness there was not even a word. By-and-by the boys called me to come out. They asked eagerly if I had seen her. Both of them lived to be men, always insisting upon their assertion. The curious part of the incident is that my dread of spirits and all horrors of night and darkness left me then.

My elder brother was in every point my opposite. Handsome, neat, polite, studious, obedient, respectful, he was a universal favorite. Our father had great hope of him, and the promise was excellent. Some good men, genuine missionaries of learning, had recently come out of the East and founded a college over in Crawfordsville, some thirty miles away. Thither my brother was taken and duly entered as of the preparatory department.

The separation nearly broke my heart. The feeling between the new collegiate and myself was more than fraternal. In his chiding he was so gentle, and in the griefs of constant happening to me, generally of hands with rods in them, he was so sympathetic, my love for him was seasoned with much that was secretly worshipful. It is singular, as I view it now, that the frequency with which he was held up to me as an example, far from tiring me, served rather to increase my pride in him. Had he been more like me, perhaps it had been different. In a few days the desire for his companionship got the mastery, and I resolved to go after him.

There had been much preparation for his departure. He had new shirts, shoes, and clothing. His boarding had been carefully prearranged. Of these preliminaries I never thought. Nor did it occur to me as the least needful to have my father's permission to make the change of residence. What was to become of me at Crawfordsville, with whom I was to live, what do, did

not bother me; they were points too trifling or too profound for my small modicum of prudence and foresight. There are lads, cleanly, clever, good-looking, who are always welcome with strangers; that I was not of them was a circumstance of which I was blissfully ignorant.

What was a college? The question is a puzzle to wise men even at this day of high-schools. I had a dim perception that it was a big house reared on the side of a road leading into the world which I had such a passionate longing to see, and that in the house there were books in bewilderment, and nice people, young and old, always coming and going, and new experiences in store for me. If I liked the change, very good; if not, very good. I could quit on getting tired. Anyhow, my brother was there.

There was living in Covington an uncle not greatly my senior in years or in wisdom. To my delight I one day heard he was going to Crawfordsville. He would ride over on horseback, and there would be plenty of room behind him for me. The chance was too good to be lost.

I went out early in advance of him two or three miles and lay in ambush for the traveller. He was of course, surprised at seeing me.

"What are you doing here?" he asked.

"Waiting for you."

"What for?"

"I want to go to Crawfordsville with you."

"Have you any business there?"

"Yes, I want to go to college."

"To college!"

He fairly choked with laughter. His good-nature, however, finally overcame his scruples, and, letting me mount behind him, he jogged on. The pony was fat and slow, and of prodigious breadth of beam. My legs



cramped, and I suffered in every bone and muscle, but I set my teeth and gave no sign. About the middle of the afternoon we drew up in front of the basement entrance of the college, and, unloading me, my kinsman pushed on to town.

The basement was of the dugout style of architecture, fronting north, and sunk half in a rise of the ground to the south. A low door, flanked with dirty windows of eight-by-ten lights, was the principal feature of that part of the building. I raised my eyes, and swept the unpainted elevation. Was this a college? I remember yet the spasm of disappointment that struck me.<sup>1</sup>

The house was not more a curiosity to me than I presently became to a benevolent-looking old gentleman who issued from the door, followed by a woman, some children, and half a dozen young men whom I came to know afterwards as students.

Small wonder that the party, one and all, viewed me askance. My straw hat, besides being a production of the country, and ragged and rain-stained, hung to the back of my head as if there had been a peg there for its special accommodation, allowing my shocky hair the broadest liberty. My feet were bare and unwashed, and, to make them more conspicuous, one of my great toes was garnished by a rag most unprofessionally applied. My trousers, rolled nearly to my knees, hung to my gaunt torso dependent upon a single suspender of cloth listing. My shirt, guiltless of a button, offered a display of neck and breast red as a Mohave Indian's. Not to leave anything to the imagination of the reader, I append a few of the questions put to me by the benevo-

<sup>1</sup> The building here described should not be confounded with any of the spacious, substantial, and tasteful edifices of the college at present adorning the great campus of Wabash College at Crawfordsville.

lent-looking gentleman, who, by-the-way, was as hatless, coatless, and brown as myself, and like me still further in that his shirt was buttonless and flaring. Somewhat later I came to know him as Uncle John Beard, a member of the legislature and proprietor of a boarding-house located in the basement for impecunious students.

"Where are you from, my son?"

"Covington," I answered.

"What's your name?"

"Lewis Wallace."

"A son of Governor Wallace?"

"Yes."

The spectators nudged each other and smiled, but the old gentleman proved his benevolence. "Run, one of you," he said, "and find the young man's brother."

Then he resumed the examination.

"Where are you going?"

"Nowhere. I've just come."

"Any friends here?"

"Only William."

"Know anybody else?"

"No."

"Does your father know of your coming?"

"No."

"Or your mother?"

"She's dead."

"What do you expect to do?"

"Go to college, if I like it."

The circle hemming me in broke into a laugh that put a stop to the inquisition. It was ill-mannered in them, even rude, especially in the students. Viewing me as a competitor for honors, they could not help demonstration of some kind. What a travesty upon their ideals of oratory and literature they must have thought me! What a satire upon them personally! On high occa-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sions, like commencement, what an ornament to the carpeted platform I would prove! Bare feet, straw hat, uncombed hair, rags, marbles, a most unconventional drapery of neck and breast—I laugh thinking of myself.

In the midst of the fun my brother appeared, himself a model of attire and deportment. I see him now, dumb with astonishment. Yet, to his credit be it said, he did not disown me.

“Why, Lew, when did you come?” he asked, taking my hand.

“Just now.”

“How?”

“On a horse with Uncle Milton.”

“What for?”

“To be with you and go to college.”

There were tears in the good fellow’s eyes as he led me out of the circle and off to his boarding-house in town. By the next week he had me dressed decently.

The faculty, out of respect for my father, doubtless, admitted me to the preparatory department, and set me at grammar, arithmetic, and Latin, with weekly compositions and recitations. A man named Barlow was the tutor. He also was of the army of indiscriminates who think they are doing their duty in giving impossible tasks to helpless incapables, and, if they are small, punishing them. I, a boy of nine, was expected to be ready with lessons which tried the grown men of my class. I strove hard, but gave up in a few weeks.

The building was in the woods west of Crawfordsville. North of it, under a hill, there was a stream, half river, half creek. And they, the woods and the little river, invited me, and I accepted and took to them. Returning once, the tutor caught me, and, in full session of the class, stood me on a stove through the afternoon. At the letting-out I escaped for good. There are people

## LEW WALLACE

who think me a graduate with a diploma to fatten my pride. In fact, I was a "prep" of Wabash College less than two months. Further it is not mine to boast. The faculty did not expel me. Most likely they were glad when I took myself off. Discipline had to be maintained.<sup>1</sup>

From the college I transferred myself to a county seminary in Crawfordsville conducted by an Episcopalian divine of recent emigration from the state of New York. The youth of the village knew him as the Reverend H——t, a person of education, fine clerical appearance, and most immaculate cravats. In his system of government the ferule was close competitor with the gad. His order of business was also somewhat peculiar. The first procedure after prayer in the morning was the infliction of punishment for offences noted the day before, and, as none of us knew whether our names were on the proscribed list, the holy master took a world of grim delight watching while we in fear and trembling stole to our seats. So frequently was I his victim that the régime of the college faculty seemed benign enough to have been borrowed from paradise.

Between this teacher and myself the *casus belli* were not recurrent but continuous, with intermissions during the severer snaps of winter. The river was a siren with a song everlasting in my ears. I could hear it the day long. It seemed specially addressed to me, and was at no time so sweet and irresistible as when I was struggling

<sup>1</sup>[As one enters the beautiful library of Wabash College to-day, above the door of entrance he may see a marble slab with three names chiselled on it — Major-General Edward S. Canby, Major-General Joseph J. Reynolds, and Major-General Lewis Wallace. Thus the loyal gentlemen who composed the faculty in 1865 sought to perpetuate the three students of the institution who in the great War of the Rebellion had risen to the highest rank at the time known to the Union army organization].



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

with the multiplication table or some abstruse rule of grammar. Trying now to discover the charms of the stream, I think them resolvable into the absolute clarity of the water limping over the brown-glazed rocks or gliding along stretches of sand Pactolian white and yellow, on through masses of transparent shade dropped by the vine-clad trees leaning from the shores—in other words, the mystery and splendor of all-abounding color. A farmer living in a two-story hewn-log house on a hill west of town, close by my friend, the little river, owned an apple orchard and a canoe. He had a heart which in some way I touched. Possibly he pitied the ragged, unwashed, lonesome lad who came to his door of mornings with simple requests; possibly he was a Whig who had voted for my father; in those days politics begot bonds strenuous as in this; anyhow, he gave me the privilege of the orchard and the canoe, and would come himself to the crest of the hill above the stream and blow a horn to call me to dinner. The exactions he put upon me were few and simple—not to get drowned or forget to bring the paddle home. Usually his first salutation was, “Well, did he [H——t] thrash you yesterday?” To which I made return, “Yes, but he didn’t make me holler.” And I would show him the welts on my legs. His honest face would flush red. “Can’t you get him down here? I’d like a chance to give him a dose of his own cholagogue.” The name of this excellent man was Beeler. God rest him!

I would like it clearly understood how profound my respect and reverence are for good women. The feeling is owing, perhaps, to my falling so often into the care of so many of them. The days here dwelt upon were passed when at home, a boarder in fact but hardly less a son, with Mrs. Kerr, the mother of the late United States Senator Joseph E. McDonald. A small, black-

eyed woman, with a voice wonderfully soft and persuasive, because it was always speaking from her heart, if I had permitted her she would have done for me as for "Joe." That she did not do more was my fault. - She lured me occasionally to church with her, and at one time had me well up in "Come thou fount of every blessing." Heaven rest her, also!

My father, it should be said, was by no means indifferent to my habits, especially the indisposition to study, which he fancied due in great part to town associations; so he gave much time casting about for means to get me out of them. The Kerrs were owners of a farm some six miles north of Crawfordsville, and, hearing that they were to move to it, he prevailed upon them to take me to the country. I welcomed the change, and went gladly. Unfortunately, the youngest of the McDonalds was the owner of a rifle. That circumstance, apparently so trifling, brought partial discomfiture to the parental scheme of reform. Instead of falling into bucolic ways, such as churning butter, hoeing corn, milking cows, helping in harvest time, I became a hunter. The solitude lurking under the old oak fastnesses of the vicinity was to my taste, and, game abounding, I passed the days shooting. My proneness to mischief spent itself on squirrels and birds. In brief time I attained singular cleverness as a shot, and, as I managed to keep the table fairly supplied with rarities in the line of game, my indulgent guardians not only winked at my wanderings, they condoned my aversion to work, and actually supplied me with ammunition. At the end of six months I graduated a farmer.

Whether profitable or unprofitable, they were certainly among the very happiest of my early life. Withal, moreover, I persisted in reading, and, returning to town, was richer of a thorough knowledge of *Plu-*

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

*tarch's Lives* and *The Life of Daniel Boone*, which, by happy chance, constituted Mr. Kerr's entire library, unless his family Bible be catalogued a part of it. The heroes of the latter, however, were not nearly so engaging to my boyish fancy as those of the immortal Bœotian.

Then there came a long change, and for the better. But for the waywardness, now become chronic, I might have turned tolerable, and, if not more like other lads, at least less savage. Going to my boarding-house one day, my elder brother met me.

"Come," he said, "make haste and wash yourself, and put on some clean clothes."

"Why, what's the matter?" I asked.

"Father's at the tavern, and he has brought us a—" He hesitated.

"A what?" said I.

"A new mother."

All the rebellious sparks in my nature blew together and broke into flame.

"Well, she may be your mother, but she's not mine. I'll not go. Who is she?"

My father had taken to him a second wife. Towards the close of the last year of his last term of lieutenant-governor he made acquaintance with Zerelda G. Sanders, eldest daughter of Dr. John H. Sanders, a Kentucky gentleman of recent removal to Indianapolis. An excellent physician, of high character and considerable means, the young city received the doctor and gave him its confidence and lucrative practice. There was opposition to the match, but the young lady had a mind of her own, and ended negotiation by going to the hotel and there quietly becoming Mrs. David Wallace. This was on December 26, 1836. Of course, I had not been consulted.

After adjournment of the legislature, in session at

## LEW WALLACE

the time of the wedding, my father brought his bride to Crawfordsville, where he took residence and engaged in his profession with fresh assiduity. Then the three brothers of us were once more united. I may be pardoned wondering if, when she saw us first, her courage was not severely tried. But she proved herself mistress of tact quite as remarkable as the lovingness of her nature. She won my brother instantly.

I met her first at table in the tavern. She gave me every attention, but I was sulky and stubborn, and, refusing every overture, resumed intimacy with the woods and the creek. The poor woman dead in her youth and lying in her lonely grave at Covington crept back into my thoughts. The others might forget her, but I would not. *She* was my mother, and I would have no other—I would die sooner. But the stranger in the little old public-house up-town seemed oblivious to my obstinacy. She bided the time when I would need her, knowing it would certainly come; and so it did. One evening I returned from a two days of truancy nearly dead of croup. She put me to bed, and nursed me with infinite skill and tenderness. I had sense enough to know she was the savior of my life, and called her mother, and in speech and fact mother she has been to me ever since.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is a proper place for me to add that the world has been as unable to resist her as I was. In all the states of the Union, in every village and city, there are good people who know and speak of her as Mother Wallace, the sweet-tongued apostle of temperance and reform.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### V

Father elected governor—Removal to Indianapolis—The capital—Sketching in church—Jacob Cox—Learns to paint—First picture—State-house library—Books—Professor Hoshour—Lessons in English—*Lorenzo Altisonant*—The turning-point.

DIRECTLY after his election to the governorship, in 1837, my father changed residence from Crawfordsville to Indianapolis, taking his family with him; and presently he was installed first occupant of a convenient though plain dwelling bought by the state for occupancy by its chief magistrates.

This transfer was to me like being set down in a new world. Indianapolis was, in fact, scarcely emerged from the woods. Stumps were frequent in its vacant downtown lots, and wagons stalled on its main streets; nevertheless, the "Capital" had all the effect upon me of a great metropolis. The overwhelming sense with which I beheld the state-house, then recently finished, and gala in its fresh stucco, serves me now as a ready measure of my verdancy and inexperience. What a marvellous achievement it appeared within and without! And when, in fulfilment of years of patient dreaming, I at last stood under the portico of the Acropolis at Athens, its pillars, with all their height and hugeness of diameter, affected me less than did those of the cheap imitation of which I am writing. Where the Soldiers' Monument stands there was then a pretentious quadrangular brick building designed originally as a residence for the governors of the commonwealth, but about as unfit for the

purpose as a painted balloon; indeed, there was never wife of a governor so foolish as to wish to try living in it; withal, however, the Versailles of one of the most extravagant of the French kings was not nearly the palace I saw in that red habitation of rats, bats, and twittering swallows. Verily, the creative in the imagination of a man, even though he be a poet, is not a tithe part of that in the eyes of a boy!

My life in Indianapolis, it must be said, became more regular and tame, a result due in part to the authority sternly exercised by my father, but mostly to the gentler, if not wiser, influence of my step-mother, who, by looking after me, keeping me washed, combed, and well-clad, gradually initiated me into the comforts of a home intelligently managed.

She was a member of the Christian Church, and insisted upon my attendance once every Sunday. I fear the services failed to impress me as she desired. My headgear was a flat-topped, black oil-cloth cap, visored before and behind, and, as it allowed pencilling of delicacy on its surface invisible until held at a certain angle against the light, I converted it into a drawing-tablet. Greasy, and always in need of deodorizing, still it was eagerly sought on the return from "meeting." The preacher, his assistant, the *characters* of the congregation, and all who had a peculiarity of face or manner were there pencilled in unmistakable likeness. So the prayer, the sermon, even the communion, observed as it was every Lord's day, might have been tedious to the others in attendance; they were not to me. I carried an occupation into the pew.

Apropos this facility in drawing, Indianapolis was fortunate in the possession of a painter. Mr. Jacob Cox was a tinner by trade, but, having the divine impulse, he broke away from the shop. Old age and death found

him at last, a pure, sunny-souled man, *vis-à-vis* with his easel. When I heard that Mr. Cox painted pictures in oil, I nerved myself and boldly invaded his studio. He was painting my father's portrait when I went in. The coincidence excused me. We became good friends, and not a few of my truanacies were passed watching him at work. In that day, it will be remembered, colors in tubes had not crossed the mountains, and grinding on a marble slab was preliminary to the make-up of a palette. After a while I offered to do the grinding. What pleasure I had in the reduction of the raw materials! How in especial the richness of the *lakes* appealed to the color-love deep-seated in my eyes! How in fancy I applied them to their several uses, now to flowers, now to fruits, now to the lips of girls, now to the bloom on the cheeks of children! My fingers itched to try them.

At length I yielded to the temptation. Doubtless my friend would have given me of his pigments had I asked him for them, and even set me down before an easel, palette and brushes in hand; but the passion was attended with a peculiar shrinking. A laugh at my awkwardness in the first attempt was dreadful in thought. So I looked up a clean tin plate, and, seeing nothing wrong or criminal in the conversion, loaded it with dabs of paints, hastened home, and, with the coveted plunder, stole up into the garret as the safest place from intrusion.

There I found myself in want of everything else needful, yet my ingenuity was equal to the trial. For brushes, I plucked hairs from the tail of a dog and tied them to a stick. Of the floor of a wooden box I made a panel to receive the picture. There came a loud demand for oil. The servant-girl was sick, and that morning the doctor had left some castor-oil, part of a prescription for her. I stole it; and, fearing the judg-

ment usually attaching to such misdeeds, I pause to say that the patient recovered in despite. Finally, what should I paint? I chose a portrait of Black Hawk, the old chief with one eye, conspicuous in a book of Indians.

Days were given to the picture until finally the colors *livered* on the tin. Meantime my whereabouts became a mystery. Conducting a reconnoissance into the garret, my mother found the portrait, and produced it in a full session of the family. "Lewis," she shrewdly asked, "didn't you take the castor-oil the doctor left for ——?" The smell of the ingredient had betrayed me. My father's gravity was upset. I never knew him to laugh so long and heartily as when, in obedience to his command, I produced the outfit of my studio.

The predilection for art might have become a passion, seeing that it was already strong enough seriously to interfere with my attendance at school. My father at length resolved on repression. Calling me into his study one day, he said: "You must give up drawing. I will not have it. If you are thinking of being an artist, listen to me. In our country art is to have its day, and the day may not come in your time. There is no demand for pictures. Rich men are too few, and the poor cannot afford to indulge a taste of the kind. To give yourself up to the pursuit means starvation. Do you understand me?"

I made a feeble attempt at argument.

"But—Mr. Cox—"

"Oh yes," he replied, "Mr. Cox is a good man; but he has a trade to fall back upon—a shop to help him make the ends meet."

Seeing the impression he was making, he went on:

"I suppose you don't want to be a poor artist—poor in the sense of inability as well as poverty. To be a



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

great painter, two things have always been necessary—a people of cultivated taste and then education for the man himself. You have neither.”

And so on for quantity. The talk was too old for me—too old at least for full appreciation—and I persisted in the practice. Not long afterwards an expected co-adjutor came to my father’s assistance.

I was then supposedly in attendance at the county seminary, conducted by a Mr. K——r, a teacher of ability but more remarkable for his violent temper. He, too, kept a ferule and a bundle of selected rods.

In a recess, one afternoon, when everybody else was out on the playground, I took a piece of chalk and drew a rabbit on the blackboard. The subject was easy and inoffensive; unfortunately, in the finish I substituted the master’s head for bunny’s, intending to rub it out in good time; but somebody called me and I forgot to apply the green baize extinguisher. Straightway, on resumption of the session, the school broke into a “snigger.” The man in authority tried to stay the unseemly demonstration. Presently his wandering eyes fell upon the picture. Then he took the *fascēs* from the wall. In the midst of the hush pervading he summoned me to the stand and beat me until the blood ran down my bare legs. His wrath appeased, he allowed me to take my seat, then bade me wipe the offence off the board. I declined. He started for me, fury in his face. Directly in my rear there was an open window. Before he could reach me I jumped out of the window, and, taking the gait of an antelope startled by hunter and hounds, fled, never stopping until under the roof of an old farmer friend three miles in the country.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Farmer Taffe. A Whig of the straitest sect, and well-to-do. He had three boys; the second, about my age, was afterwards delegate to Congress from Nebraska. They, the house, the farm, and

My father's peremptory lecture against the allurements of art had failed its purpose. Now, however, one point in it had landed home. After the affair with Mr. K——r, I could no longer deny the non-existence of the appreciation urged as a prime essential to success in the life. To starvation there was superadded a likelihood of being done to death by sticks and stones. I resolved to give up the dream. Still it haunts me. At this day even, I cannot look at a great picture without envying its creator the delight he must have had the while it was in evolution. And why not make the confession unreservedly? Why not admit that in biographical literature there are no lives so fascinating and zestful to me as those of master-artists? And that while reading them I am always hard put to smother an impulse to renew my youth in so far, at least, as the purest and sweetest of its inclination is concerned? The age is propitious; there are patrons in plenty; schools abound; the great galleries of Europe are scarce a week away; taste prevails, and invention survives despite photography.

The extinguishment of the beautiful dream left me disconsolate, but not for a great while.

The library in the state-house was just across the rotunda from the executive office. Two west windows, though frequently muddled by the festoonery of intrusive spiders, lighted the room of afternoons, but not of mornings. In the latter, it was pervaded with a gloom which, while somewhat troublesome to a visitor anxious to get a volume quickly that he might the sooner be gone, was yet in harmony with the delicious silence of the place. Howbeit others view the matter, I prefer, when entering apartments of the kind, to have

all on it, were at my service. Time was never counted on me there, nor did my welcome, though often tried, ever stale.

the inscriptions on the books develop slowly from modest glow to golden gleam, for then they give depth to the enshadowment and enrich it as starlight enriches the dark-turning violet of evening skies.

On this occasion my entry was in the forenoon early. There was a suggestion of stealth in the stillness of my steps on the carpeted floor. From having been in the British Museum and the Vatican, I now know how small the total of the collection of books was; at that time, however, I had never imagined such a presence of volumes *en masse*. The observation was from a central position. Slowly, very slowly, I swept the four sides, lined with shelving to a height out of reach except with the aid of a ladder. Books everywhere, of all sizes, of all colors! Had any one ever read them all? Of the cumulative labor required for their production, and the *mind* in them, I did not think, any more than I thought of the motive, that deepest abstraction underlying each of them—they were revelations time was to bring me.

Presently an itching of the fingers, like that which caught me when grinding colors for my friend the artist, seized me; only, in this instance, it went not further than an intense desire to handle separately every book in the array, exactly as one boy always wants to feel the pocket-knife and marbles he sees in the hands of another boy. There was a step-ladder, the property of the librarian, and he being out—it would have mattered nothing had he been present—I carried it into a corner and set about prospecting the shelves. Noon came, and I was still at work. Thinking, doubtless, that my father was a colleague of his in the government of the state, and that so much comity might not be unsafe, the keeper let me have my bent. I forgot I was due at school, and that dinner was a due of mine. Closing hour in the evening arrived; then I gave up to return next



day—and the next—and next—until the review was done. At the end, I had located every picture-book in the heap, even as a sportsman marks his fallen birds.

The last remark, I perceive, is open to an inference that none but the picture-books interested me. But the incident is not concluded—far from it. In the over-haul I came upon a volume entitled *Astoria*, and another, *The Last of the Mohicans*. Let say to the contrary who will, there is something in names. These attracted me, and in good time I went back to them, with result that I uncovered one of the most continuous, if not the greatest, happinesses which had befallen me. In the most impressionable period of my life I was introduced to Washington Irving and Fenimore Cooper, or, more plainly, to their works; and I revelled in them, especially Cooper's, whose subjects were better adapted to my opening mind. For months and months after that discovery my name figured on the receipt register of the library more frequently than any other. I took the treasures, now a sea story, now a Leatherstocking Tale, and, in the haymow or off alone in the woods, sailed and sailed with the Red Rover, or, from the store of quaint old Natty Bumppo, eked my fill of wisdom. My rating at school was the worst; yet, strange to say, education went on with me, for I was acquiring a habit of reading. Looking back to the thrashings I took stoically and without a whimper, I console myself thinking of the successful lives there have been with not a jot of algebra in them.

It were well, probably, if an hiatus were made of my years from the tenth including the fourteenth. The days throughout were given to fun.

The fun was of the kind elderly people did not relish, and with great unanimity they branded it wickedness, and me a bad boy sure to be hung. For the sake of the



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

*genus* boy—presumably they are all alike—I must interpose a distinction between wickedness and mischief. The latter is always void of malice. It was so at least in my practice. Raids upon gardens and melon-patches were of course, but it was a point religiously observed to spare the trees and the vines; nor can I recall a case of injury to person. I had my *compadres*. Discovering early the advantages there are in organization, we begat the Red Eye and the Hay Press Club, and housed it in the attic of a three-story business house which had two indispensable virtues—a roomy fireplace and access by a movable ladder through a trap-door. There we had banquets not exactly Apicean, yet of marvellous variety, for which the town and country were unknowing but generous contributors. The menu on such occasions can be easily imagined. Thence we made excursions to the river, and, adjourning to the woods, cultivated athletics—running, jumping, tumbling, boxing, the last terminating frequently in bloody noses, blackened eyes, and bruised bodies. Boxing-gloves were a saving grace in reserve. Our Corn Dance is never to be forgotten. It was an annual feast celebrated in the milky time of the ivory ears. With thought and preparation, we turned it into an elaborate symposium spiced with cocking-mains. Adjournment always waited on the evening of the third day.

Fun, fairly distinguished from wickedness, has its wholesome uses. Health is better than learning without health.

My thirteenth year was passed in Centreville, Indiana, where there was a teacher of such repute that my father decided to send me to him. An aunt dwelt there also, and it was thought she would occasionally look after me; that is, see to the buttons on my clothes, keep my hair down, and trifles of the sort. She did not fail expecta-

tion. My elder brother was assigned to me as companion, principally, I think, to assist my aunt.

Professor Samuel K. Hoshour—his name is purposely given in full—came more nearly to my ideal school-master than any to whose tender mercies it had been my lot to fall. He wielded the rod and vigorously, but with discrimination and undeniable justice, and really taught me. He even interested me in arithmetic. Getting me to his house of evenings, with infinite patience he would cipher me over the knottier problems, explaining the rules pencil in hand. Better evidence of Christian nature no man can furnish.

Professor Hoshour was the first to observe a glimmer of writing capacity in me. An indifferent teacher would have allowed the discovery to pass without account; but he set about making the most of it, and in his method there was so much wisdom that it were wrong not to give it with particularity, the more so as some modern pedagogue may in that way be helped to an understanding of what I mean by discrimination applied to pupils.

The general principle on which the professor acted is plain to me now. The lack of aptitude for mathematics in my case was too decided not to be apparent to him; instead of beating me for it, he humanely applied himself to cultivating a faculty he thought within my powers and to my taste. Or, in another form, poverty of talent in one line, as he reasoned, might be compensated for by the development of ability in another.

I remember his beginning perfectly; inasmuch as it set me to wondering that one could waste time and effort in plying a lad like me with a subject so serious and seemingly beyond my years. What had he on which to believe that I could even understand what he said to me? But when at length I saw I could under-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

stand him, and that he too saw it, how delicious the flattery! And what stimulation there was in it!

The first sitting he gave me was in one of the evening séances at his house without witnesses. By a series of questions, artfully put, he led me to expose the whole field of my reading, and I think it encouraged as well as surprised him, for he presently brought out two volumes of size.

"These," he said, "are lectures on rhetoric by John Quincy Adams. They are given to rules for composition. You must dig them out for yourself sometime, for there can be no good writing if one of them be violated."

I recall also a saying of the professor's own.

"Were you to ask me," he said, "which of the rules is the most important, which comes nearest being the essence of the whole art, here it is: In writing, everything is to be sacrificed to clearness of expression—everything."

By way of illustration, I suppose, he next produced a volume which he called *The Spectator*.

"Here," he said, "are some of the finest examples of clear English ever printed. I will select some of the best. Now listen." He read a paragraph, and declared, "You can't help understanding that."

From the table he then picked a thin pamphlet, premising, "This is a work of my own, *Lorenzo Altisonant* by name." At the end of an example he looked at me quizzically and said, "You don't understand a word of it, do you?"

"Is it English?" I asked.

The professor had a habit of tugging at the lower skin of his cheek, and as a result the skin hung to the jaw like a flabby purse of yellow leather. Giving the purse an extra pull, he chuckled inwardly, making me think of Natty Bumpo, and explained.

"This, you see, is a story in words of five syllables. I wrote it to show the absurdity of big words so striven after by young writers, and, for the matter of that, by many old ones as well."

Taking another book, he selected a passage and had me read it aloud, saying, at the conclusion, "How clear and simple that is! Now try *Altisonant* again."

I tried, but gave it up.

And he commented: "The first was from *The Vicar of Wakefield*, by one Oliver Goldsmith. You must take the book home with you. Washington Irving borrowed his style from Goldsmith. What style is we will come to after a while. Let me speak of language now. Our English is mainly composed of Saxon and Latin. *Altisonant* is very little Saxon. See how preferable the Saxon is. Our conversation is almost altogether Saxon. Let me give you an example of the very purest Saxon."

Taking a New Testament, "There," he said, "read that. It is the story of the birth of Jesus Christ."

This was entirely new to me, and I recall the impression made by the small part given to the three wise men. Little did I dream then what those few verses were to bring me—that out of them *Ben-Hur* was one day to be evoked.

I can see the professor standing in his door, lamp in hand and bareheaded, dismissing me for the night, with exactly the same civilities he would have sped an official the most important in the state. Ah, the kindly cunning of the shrewd old gentleman! He had dropped a light into my understanding and caught me.

So, step by step, the professor led me into and out of depths I had never dreamed of, and through tangles of subtlety and appreciations which proved his mind as thoroughly as they tried mine. Before the year was out he had, as it were, taken my hand in his and intro-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

duced me to Byron, Shakespeare, and old Isaiah. The year was the turning-point of my life, and out of my age and across his grave I send him, Gentle master, hail, and all sweet rest! Now I know wherein I am most obliged to you—unconsciously, perhaps, but certainly you taught me how to educate myself up to every practical need.

## VI

The literary society—Goldsmith's essay—Historical poem—Smith and Powhatan—*The Man-at-Arms : A Tale of the Tenth Century*.

A LITERARY SOCIETY was a feature of the seminary course to which, on return from Centreville, I was subjected; and if I write of it with some particularity, it is because the society was more interesting and useful to me than the regular instruction of the school. Its membership was not exclusive. The master had nothing to do with it; he merely permitted the use of the school-room for its sessions, which were on Friday evenings. The exercises included debates, recitations, compositions, and criticisms. We also studied parliamentary law, with *Jefferson's Manual* for text-book, and practised it in moot legislatures. The chairman arbitrarily assigned a duty to each of us, and if we failed in performance or absented ourselves without good excuse we were fined. I cannot say the treasury was greatly enriched from the penal part of our code, for the reason chiefly that we seldom had wherewith to pay our assessments. Such organizations are usually short of life; this one, however, endured and was faithfully attended through several years.

It would be pleasant to give a list of the men who in that society made their first signs of talent—lawyers, politicians, journalists, useful men generally, some of them of national distinction. Among those still abroad in the land — and even yet they are not a few — there

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

exists a comradeship not unlike that obtaining with old soldiers; and when they chance to meet they grow reminiscent and tell of the haps and mishaps which took place in the old literary club.

Careless and indifferent though I was as a scholar—that was the term then used to denote a pupil—I yet undertook the parts assigned me in the society, whether in debate, recitation, or composition. The competition stimulated me to effort. My successes, I am bound to confess, were due to my father's library; and, while my brother was much better as a speaker, I may, without immodesty, claim that I excelled him as a writer.

Our master-critic was a young Mr. M——k, who was well-read in English literature, of a sarcastic turn, and in the habit of disposing of our essays with a freedom against which we sometimes rebelled. As my productions seemed particularly obnoxious to him, I once thought to get the laugh on him, and, going to Goldsmith for help, copied a paper and read it as my own. The trap worked perfectly. M——k had never been so severe. My language was pedantic; the sentences were stiff and obscurely turned; the ideas puerile. At the conclusion of his critique I arose and made explanation, book in hand. Much I doubt if our reviewer ever forgot the shouts of the audience or the gibes which followed him into the school-room and out on the playground. "Poor Goldsmith" was not to be trifled with. The medallion in Westminster Abbey, and the long Johnsonian epitaph in Latin under it, were certificates of a mastery of good English all too strong for such impeachment.

I must have achieved some popularity as a writer with my mates of the society. Under their encouragement I commenced the fabrication of verses. Lyrics flowed freely from my pen. A newspaper of the city

opened its columns to me, and I flourished with considerable promise, especially in the opinion of the young ladies who were my inspiration.<sup>1</sup>

My most ambitious effort was a historical poem in the style and measure of "Marmion" and the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," and with John Smith—Virginia John—for hero. I followed the redoubtable swashbuckler through his affair with Powhatan. The several hundred lines concluded with his dramatic salvation by Pocahontas. All I remember of them is that the catastrophe was to my perfect satisfaction.

Another elaborate performance was an epic entitled the "Travels of a Bed-bug." The subject, according to the veracious story, was born in the office of a lawyer of Indianapolis well known throughout the state for cynicism and ability; thence it passes from office to office, and from hotel to hotel, with adventures by the way, until, like Alexander, it succumbed to overdrink. I had the impudence to publish the scurrilous squib, to the amusement of the town and the just indignation of the gentlemen concerned. Learning that several of them were looking for me, canes in hand, I went hunting, and was gone time enough for the flurry to blow over. Thereupon, finding that, like painting, poetry did not succeed best in the shadow of cudgels, I wisely quit it. I say wisely, for it is my mature judgment that under similar circumstances Homer had not persisted in supplying the world with masterpieces.

The discouragement was great, and I acknowledged it to myself sorrowfully; but thinking, if I could not do better in prose production, it could at least be prosecuted in peace and without danger, I conceived the idea of writing a novel and reading it to the society

<sup>1</sup> A lady of Indianapolis has some of my earliest attempts, and she holds them as a "rod of terror" over my head.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

in instalments. This was in my sixteenth year. After a great deal of casting about for a plot, I finally decided on one likely to be agreeable to my auditors. Even then the importance to a writer of first discerning a body of readers possible of capture and then addressing himself to their tastes was a matter of instinct with me. It was high noon, moreover, of the day when G. P. R. James was holding the English world in very respectable rivalry with Walter Scott.<sup>1</sup>

As first efforts, in whatever line, are usually interesting, a synopsis of this one may at least satisfy the curiosity of young readers and writers.

So I remark that the composition of the story, and the reading and study required to veneer it with what is now known as *color*, gave me so much pleasure that the personages who figured in it and the general plot linger clearly in my memory.

I began by naming it *The Man-at-Arms: A Tale of the Tenth Century*, a preliminary so nearly like putting the cart before the horse that I now decline to recommend it to beginners in the story-telling art. My next step, demanded by the first, was to invent incidents and characters to bear out the title and at the same time invest the work with as much interest as possible. To be sure, love was the central idea. For hero I had a page who, besides being of good blood, would have graduated in another year to knighthood. He was an extraordinary youth. In his lord's tilting court he already bore himself like a paladin. He played the lute, sang ballads of knights and fair ladies, excelled in horsemanship, and, withal, was so graceful and had

<sup>1</sup> Mr. James did some good work; and why he has so utterly disappeared cannot be explained except on the theory that he wrote so much as to fall into unpardonable repetition of himself. In novel-writing it will not do for the same "solitary horseman" to ride through one's chapters too frequently.

such a taking turn of speech it was hard to say which adored him more, the men or the women.

The Duke of ——— (I regret having forgotten the rest of the name), to whom this military apprentice was bounden, divided his time between camp and castle. He was also very proud—who ever heard of a humble Spaniard? This one, however, had reason to be proud. His blood was blue as a Biscayan bay; the bearings of his escutcheon filled the kingdom with envy; his duchy was broad as an ordinary state; his castle could have been easily mistaken for a royal palace; his train in the field was an army.

The family of the great man consisted of a duchess, haughty as her lord, and one daughter, Inez by name, young, romantic, and beautiful as a painter's dream of beauty. In the songs of the minstrels she was the Rose of Guadalajara. Though but sixteen—the reader will understand, I am sure, why it was not possible for me to make her older than myself—nobles of high degree, at home and from France and Italy and other far countries, offered her their titles, honors, and estates; it was even said that once a king had come and laid himself and his crown at her feet. But she would none of her suitors, old or young; whereat the women said biting things of her, and the men whom she refused swore oaths all unlicensed by the Church.

But in tales all mysteries come to solution. An early chapter in the book, calling it such by grace, was given to an escapade of the wilful heiress. Down in the crypt of the castle she met Pedro, the page, by appointment. The passage was very affecting, and, lover-like, the two swore eternal fidelity to each other. A hunchback jester of the duke's caught them in the tryst, and, being a lover of the young lady himself, all mindless of his deformity, he hastened to profit by the discovery. The

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

description of the scene when the imp yelled hoarsely at the devoted pair from a hole in the wall which was the terminus of a hidden gallery unknown to them, afforded me much comfort.

The duchess's mother put the maiden to an exacting cross-examination. Alas, then, for the daughter! Alas, also, for Pedro! The course of their true love became a roaring cataract. He was deposed and stripped of his doublet of Flanders wool and his silken hose and morocco slippers with high toes chained to his golden garters. In menial garb he was dismissed the castle. The servants who deposited him on the thither side of the drawbridge, all eyes beholding, were rewarded as for a deed of high emprise. The ambitious Pedro nevertheless haunted the vicinity. He could not tear himself away. Oh, for a minute's interview! That were long enough to assure him if his paragon were faithful. He had a scheme with which to try her.

She, on her side, was subjected to semi-imprisonment. A *dueñaza*, as the Spaniards term a hateful old widow, was given charge of her, with orders not to allow her out of sight. But by-and-by the termagant came to sympathize with her, and was then as accommodating as Juliet's nurse. She took long walks in the vicinity of the castle, and at length stumbled upon Pedro. Thereafter, especially of dark nights, a rope ladder dropped from a balcony helped the new Romeo to interviews all the sweeter because stolen. These, it was noticeable, were incidents entirely to the taste of my audience of the literary society.

It then appeared that from the castle, presently after his drumming-out, my hero had betaken himself to a hermit who, in enjoyment of most odorous reputation for sanctity, dwelt in a cavern of a mountain two or three leagues distant. Nor was it difficult to enlist the

good man—everybody loves a lover. He offered advice and help. If Pedro would bring his lady to the cave, he would marry them; then the duke and duchess might go mad—only the Pope could undo the binding.

An elopement ensued—an incident which called out my best description. The gallant Pedro bore his lady-love down the swaying ladder successfully. The night was dark, but he had the assistance of the *dueñaza*, who cast the ladder loose when the descent was accomplished. A horse was ready in a near grove of olive-trees. A stout steed it was, to be sure, and with his paragon on the cantle behind him Pedro rode fast as he could go to the hermitage. The path was rough, and rivulets crossed the broken path. Through the shadowy pine woods cascades roared in ghostly music. At break of day the refuge was reached. The gentle hermit was in waiting for them. His altar was rude; nevertheless, there were lighted candles on it, and a Madonna, crowned and veiled, was in hovering on the wall behind. He knew the need of haste, and married the fugitives.

Hardly was the last word said—the last word of the blessing—when the myrmidons of the duke appeared at the cavern door. The accursed hunchback had seen the flight and alarmed the castle. Six knights, on duty at the time, leaped into their saddles and set out in pursuit.

The scene in the cavern was made duly terrible. The bride fainted and fell as dead in front of the altar. When the retainer laid hands upon her, Pedro snatched a sword from one of them and used it so valiantly that soon three of them were past fighting, dying, if not dead, and their companions fled. Rallying, however, they returned, and at length succeeded in overpowering the plucky husband. As they were about to administer the *coup de grâce*, the hermit rushed forward, crucifix in



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

hand, and saved him, wounded and bleeding, though he could not so much for the ill-starred Inez. She was lifted on a horse and borne back to the castle.

Pedro had made a manful fight; so much the bodies of his assailants laid out on the chapel floor of the lordly fortress attested. Indeed, he might have been even more successful had he been provided with shield and armor. For days and nights he continued delirious and raving for his bride; but the hermit proved himself a skilful leech—true hermits are always skilful leeches—and finally he brought the youth around. This part of the tale was received with heartiest approval. The only criticism offered was that I had not killed more of the myrmidons; and I confess to shame at the shortcoming.

The duke, becomingly stern-minded and unforgiving, refused to recognize the validity of the marriage. To make sure, however, he despatched an agent to Rome, and, after obtaining an annulment of the bonds, such as they were, he contracted the unhappy child to a suitor of princely degree. The day of the wedding arrived. The hidalgos of Guadalajara and noble guests, men and women, were assembled in multitude. The rich altar blazed with tall candles. An archbishop, in canonicals of golden cloth, stood before it ready to celebrate the function at once the most solemn and binding of his office. All the circumstances were in contrast with the shorn and hurried ceremony of the first wedding. At the last moment the mind of the bride gave way, and in view of the assemblage she sank a raving maniac. The archbishop refused to proceed. It is hardly necessary to remark upon my appreciation of this "situation." It furnished me an opportunity of which, everything considered, I made the most.

Pedro at length recovered, and, listening to the counsel of the wise hermit, took a resolve in accordance

with the spirit of the time. He became a Soldier of the Cross. Through the anchorite he obtained arms, a suit of armor, and a horse suitable for the emprise. His vows were peculiar. He would live in armor. No man should know his name or history, no one see his face, not even a servant. Alone he would spend his days, and so, God pleased, he would die. His cloak was black, relieved by a red cross on breast and back. His shield, of the same funereal hue, bore a bleeding heart pierced with a stiletto. The morning of his departure the hermit revealed that he was a nobleman, and that he had been a knight; doffing his gown, and arraying himself in layman's garb, he laid a sword thrice across Pedro's shoulders and bade him rise a knight dedicated to the Holy Sepulchre.

Pedro joined the most famous hero of the first crusade, Tancred, and became his favorite man-at-arms. In the great battle of Dorylæum he performed such prodigies of valor that thousands of the devoted besieged him to set up a standard of his own and accept them as followers. But he declined, thinking that as a chief it would be impossible for him to keep his vow of privacy inviolate. In the final assault of Jerusalem he was first on a scaling-ladder, and would have been first on the wall had he not voluntarily stayed and given way to Tancred next below him. Tancred publicly acknowledged the courtesy, and the increase of fame following was tremendous. The great chiefs — Godfrey, Hugh Vermandois, Robert of Flanders, Robert of Normandy, Raymond of Toulouse, Tancred, and others—vied in doing honors to the peerless Knight of the Bleeding Heart. Nor was he unknown to the infidels. At sight of him they gave way. Once, in the press of a great battle with Arslan the Sultan, he came hand-to-hand with that doughty leader of the enemies of God, and would have slain him but for an

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

unlooked-for intervention. As it was, he wrenched the shield of the arch-infidel from his arm and brought it into camp. Fame, however, wrought no change of habit in him. He kept his tent alone, prepared his own frugal meals, and cared for his horse himself; when there was plenty, he attended no banquets; in time of famine—and they were frequent—he was never heard complaining. Plumeless and plain in guise, he was diligent in prayer, and therefore the exemplar always on the tongues of the preaching priests. The King of Jerusalem, Godfrey, offered him office and title; he rejected them, and, as he never took off his helmet, nobody knew him by countenance, or if he were old or young. Unequalled in fight, he was without a rival in the tourney. His vows were known, and they covered and excused his eccentricities and saved him from the gossips.

All this took place, if the story may be believed, in the year of our Lord 1097. Leaving Pedro to his glory in Jerusalem, the scenes shifted back to Guadalajara and the duke. The unfortunate Inez, at death's door, recovered her mind. The titled world justified the father's cruelty, yet was he ill in conscience. One day a priest, with a retinue, stopped at the castle gate and asked audience of him; and, being admitted, he stood and taxed the noble with offence against God in refusing recognition of the sacrament of marriage lawfully celebrated in the cavern of the recluse. To the inquiry what he knew about that affair, the visitor boldly declared himself the celebrant on the occasion. The duke at first wrangled, pleading the annulment by the Pope. He was answered that the release was obtained by misrepresentation and fraud; in proof of which a certificate to that effect by the Holy Father, done in form at the Vatican, was exhibited. The visitor proceeded to denunciation.

"Your agent," he said, "told his Holiness, with blasphemous falsehood, that I, who bound the two in bonds indissoluble by man, was neither monk nor priest, but a fugitive hiding from justice and unauthorized to perform any function of the Church. See—" he continued, with growing intensity—"see what is here written, also under seal."

The duke read the paper delivered him, from which it appeared that at the time the marriage was celebrated the recluse, besides being of ducal rank, was a priest in voluntary retreat preparatory to promotion to a vacant cardinalate.

With that the duke yielded. Already weakened by remorse, he dropped to his knees, offering to do any penance. The visitor attacked him again.

"See and read," he cried, presenting a second paper attested like the other. This the offender read with trembling, and well he might. It bade him don the cross, and with all his retainers betake himself to the Holy Land. So only could he hope forgiveness of Heaven. Arrived there, he was to seek the lost Pedro, and, on finding, restore him to the arms of his wife. A year of military service was also required of the duke. The penalty for refusal was excommunication. What could the man do but obey? In the spring of 1099 he sailed and joined Godfrey in Jerusalem, with three thousand Spanish lances. The faithful Inez accompanied him with a train of noble ladies.

Here was a new "situation," and the possibilities in the way of fine writing can be easily discerned. Pedro was a denizen of the same camp with the beloved mistress of his bleeding heart. Times and times again he met the duke, always without betraying himself. Though aware of the search made for him by the now humbled lord, he sternly held to his vows. There were



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

battles and battles with increase of renown for him; yet he contented himself with an occasional far view of the woman whose every breath was a sigh for him. Her face told him her tale of sorrow and faithfulness. Only he did not know that the duke was there by papal order to find and restore him, and the proverbial pride of his race was a restraint in addition to his vows. These, it should be understood, were points all carefully elaborated.

I remember being worried about the *finale*. There were many ways of bringing the hero and heroine once more together. It seemed best to accomplish that end in a manner which would have the appearance of a heavenly interposition. So a famine was allowed to introduce a plague into the camp and city. The misery became general, and the women, the high-born especially, wishing to serve Christ, resolved themselves into relief corps and went about fearlessly nursing the afflicted soldiery. The lady Inez, by this time fully restored in health and more lovely than ever, did not spare herself in the merciful work.

It passed through the camp one day that the Knight of the Bleeding Heart had not been seen. Observers remarked that his tent remained closed and silent. The lady Inez, in lead of her corps of ministrants, was first to enter it. On a bed of straw she found him lying, to all appearances dying. Not minding his feeble protest, she unlaced his helmet and took it off. The recognition was instantaneous. The scene that ensued was to the author's heart, and he gave it his best power.

The romantic meeting of the two, so faithful under such trying circumstances, spread through the camp, bringing the duke in haste to the tent, and the *dénouement* was happy as could be asked. Brought back to life and health—there is no leech like love—and formally delivered from his vows, Pedro returned to Spain, and

## LEW WALLACE

in time succeeded to the title and possessions of his repentant father-in-law. All his days thereafter were divided between duty to his family and king.

Such was my first formal attempt at fiction. There were probably fifteen chapters in the story, and quite two hundred and fifty closely written pages of foolscap, the whole done in a bound book. The work lay for several years at home, but was misplaced or destroyed during my absence as a soldier in the war with Mexico. I looked for it on my return from that service without success. Its loss, I freely confess, has been one of my standing regrets, if only for the amusement it would have given me through the succeeding years.

The composition furnished most agreeable employment, and that the plot was carried forward to a finish proves that, with all my proneness to waste of time, I must have been capable even then of some continuity of purpose, if not steady application.

With respect to quality, if further remark upon the subject is pardonable, no doubt the writing was sophomoric; for the sentimentalism which ruled me in those days was of the fervid kind, intolerant of sober expression—the kind to keep a boyish imagination in lurid glow. It is to be added that there was a copy of *Ossian* in my father's library to which I was addicted. I remember keeping it at hand, and appealing to it frequently, especially when engaged in the description of personal encounters; from which it is fair inference, I think, that my battle scenes must have been overfull of thunderous accessories, such as war-cries, Christian and infidel, clangor of shields, crash of swords and battle-axes, ghosts in air, horses in mad career, and the like for quantity. Still, of one thing I am certain—the society always turned out in force such times as my readings came round.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### VII

Youth—The trip to Tippecanoe battle-ground—The red petticoat—  
Attempt to go to Texas—Capture by Dr. S——rs and a constable  
—School bills—Life at home—Reading Macaulay—English re-  
views—Leave home.

THE period of life to which I now come, that of youth, was largely given to reading. Occasionally I broke away to indulge the passion for adventure; in course of which I did foolish things too numerous and petty for mention, mixed with things not foolish except as they were thoughtlessly done. An illustration or two may be excused.

In 1840, taking advantage of my father's absence from home, I did myself the honor to represent him as a delegate to the great convention held at the Tippecanoe battle-ground in the interest of General William Henry Harrison. That my delegacy was by self-appointment did not, as I saw it then, interfere with its attractiveness. In plainer terms, I ran away.

The round I knew would take ten or twelve days. My preparations consisted of a ragged straw hat, the shirt on my back, trousers rolled up to my knees. That I had neither coat nor vest, that I was barefooted and without a cent in my pocket or the slightest idea of how I was to subsist, were trifles too light to excite concern. The getting through under such circumstances is worth recital now if only as a revelation of the humor of that celebrated campaign.

In mortal fear lest I should be turned back by some

one of the Indianapolis delegation who knew me, I scouted the forenoon of the first day in advance of the procession of wagons lumbering slowly and with vast labor of horses over the corduroy and through the almost bottomless pits of the so-called Michigan road. I had one companion, a school-mate, also a runaway.<sup>1</sup> The first village was ———, ten miles from the capital. On the right hand going into the village stood a tavern of ancient pattern; opposite it, at the left, was a blacksmith-shop of logs. A crowd filled the space in front of the tavern, and they were Democrats who, in derision, had laid a pole from the shop over the attenuated sidewalk, garnished with a red flannel petticoat. The reference was to one of the scandals which the political enemies of General Harrison had handed down from a former generation.

Now, while trudging through the mud I had been intent upon finding a way to make myself and companion acceptable to the cheering enthusiasts behind us; for soon or late, if the journey were made, it would become necessary to fall back upon them. The detestable ensign drew our attention, and, looking from it to the democracy blatant in front of the tavern, I saw my chance. Up the rough corner of the shop to the roof I went like a squirrel. There was a storm of threats and curses, of course. Nothing daunted, I tore the pole from its fastenings, and followed it to the sidewalk; then down the road we ran with our prize.

The first wagon of the train belonged, as luck would have it, to an old gentleman, a Whig of the intensest color from Noblesville, named Cole.

“What have you there?” he asked, stopping.

We held the petticoat up.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards I had him appointed assistant commissary-general of my division—Major Joseph P. Pope.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Where did you get it?"

We told him.

"Who are you?" he next asked.

That we answered also.

"Where are you going?"

"To the convention—if you'll take us."

"Get right in," he shouted.

I made haste to obey him. My comrade's heart failed, and he went home.

After that the trip was easy. The wagon, bedding, mess-chest—everything the old gentleman had with him, including a barrel of hard cider—was at my service. At Lafayette he even bought me a suit of clothes new from head to foot. I candidly believe that no one of the multitude attending the convention saw or heard more of it than I did; for, once on the ground, I took no rest, neither did I sleep.

Another of my enterprises was vastly wilder, but, fortunately for me, less successful.

It was in 1842 or '43. The Texas war of independence was at its height. All sympathy, especially in the West and South, was with the Texans. They were Americans, and the names of Crockett, Travis, and Bowie were on every tongue. The fever caught me. To my desk-mate, Aquilla C——k, my senior by a couple of years, and bright, I said one morning:

"Let's go and join Commodore Moore."<sup>1</sup>

"I'll do it," he returned, and the reply bespeaks the elements in his composition.

"He'll make us midshipmen," I argued.

We got a skiff, laid in a supply of provisions and an armament consisting of a rifle and shot-gun and big butcher-knives strapped sailor-fashion to our manly

<sup>1</sup> Commodore Moore was at the head of the Texan navy.

hips. A few days prior a flat-boat had sailed from the port of Indianapolis bound for New Orleans. To overtake it was our first point. White River was in friendly boom, and all would have gone well but for our overzeal in the sacred cause. To make Commodore Moore and all his co-laborers willing to die for liberty completely happy, we decided to do a bit of recruiting among the big boys of the school. We failed, of course, which was bad, yet not so bad as the publication of our enterprise, as will presently appear.

The day of departure arrived. C——k and I went to our boat separately. What was our astonishment to find the whole male faction of the seminary on the bank above the landing. It seemed half the town was out. They cheered us, and we jumped in, unshipped our oars, waved our hats in farewell, and shot heroically into the friendly current.

In wise forethought of supper in some lonesome jungle of the river at night, my comrade landed on an island to kill a goose with a stick. We flung the bird aboard, thinking it dead; but just as we swung past a field lively with harvesters the goose revived and uttered a "honk" so loud, so long, made doubly embarrassing by a fight for life with its great wings, that I have ever since been able to understand how its possible ancestors on the Capitoline Hill could have saved Rome. The harvesters heard the outcry, grasped the situation, and, unmooring a canoe below the bank, set out in pursuit. They were swift; so were we. For miles they kept the chase. Once we cleared for action—that is, we loaded our guns. We were awfully strung up, and I fear it would have made little difference to us then where the war we were seeking began, whether in Indiana or Texas. Fortunately they quit.

Below Indianapolis ten miles are the Bluffs, note-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

worthy because of a dam across the river to supply the canal finished to that point. The fall over the dam was too high for shooting, making it necessary to land in the canal for portage. We reconnoitred as we drew near, but saw nobody. C——k stayed with the boat, while I went ashore for some kindling. He saw a couple of men whom he recognized come out of a saw-mill where they had been hiding—Dr. S——rs, my mother's father, and a constable. A panic seized him; he yelled to me, but gave the skiff a shove, and when I reached the place he had put the canal between us. While I was imploring him to come back for me the constable made me his prisoner.

Dr. S——rs was a wise man. Without a lecture on my wickedness, or so much as a reference to my elopement, he landed me in Indianapolis after night. He also effected a treaty with the bloody-minded school-teacher, by the terms of which the man of the rod agreed to let me go unflogged. Certainly I was greatly indebted to the good doctor; but, wishing to be strictly just, my obligation to the constable was of an equal measure. The one saved me from humiliation, the other saved my prestige in the juvenile world of my being. To have been arrested and brought back by a constable was altogether different from meekly losing heart and voluntarily abandoning my comrade.

I come now to an incident so grave in its effect upon my life that it cannot be omitted. The reader is to think of me in my sixteenth year, unusually tall, thin, olive-hued, and of an all-abiding confidence in myself hard to distinguish from vanity, due mostly to a physical condition wholly without an ailment. The incident referred to could not have found a more able-bodied subject.

My father's eyes were black and intensely penetra-

tive, and latterly I had observed them unusually observant of me. Calling me into the library one morning after breakfast, he told me he had something to say. From the drawer of a table supporting the bookcase he drew a package of papers neatly folded and tied with red tape. Seldom have I seen him so deliberate and serious.

"I want you to look at the papers in this package," he said.

I returned the parcel.

"What are they?" he asked.

"Receipts."

"Receipts for what?"

"I take them to be receipted school-bills."

"Were I to die to-night," he continued, "your portion of my estate would not keep you a month. I have struggled to give you and your brothers what, in my opinion, is better than money—education. Since your sixth year I have paid school-bills for you; but—one day you will regret the opportunities you have wilfully thrown away. I am sorry, disappointed, mortified; so, without shutting the door upon you, I am resolved that from to-day you must go out and earn your own livelihood. I shall watch your course hopefully. That is all I have to say."

He waited to hear from me, and, as he was standing, I brought him a chair.

The announcement did not surprise me. Indeed, it had frequently occurred to me to ask him for permission to do the thing he now laid upon me. What I could resort to had been considered. As it was, he had not cast me off, but simply left me to myself—that saved my self-love. I admitted the justice of his course. I admitted also the duty he owed the younger children, my half-brother and his sister, and ended by thanking



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

him for all his kindness to me in the past. That I could take care of myself was not to be doubted.

At the close of the interview he said, "Had you not better keep the receipts?"

"Why should I keep them?"

"Some time," he returned, "you may be disposed to think I have not done a whole part by you; should that happen, you have only to turn to this package and count the years it covers."

I assured him I needed no reminder.

Only a skeleton of the conversation is given. There was no argument, no reproach, no entreaty. The affair was merely as if one party were making the other a present; and such in fact it was—he had given me my freedom. His affection stood demonstrated. He had punished me often and severely, but never undeservedly. He was a good man and patient; I had been a bad boy—that was all. Life was before me in which to make him amends. Had I been less confident of earning my bread respectably, my feelings might have worn a different color. He offered me his hand. I took it, and passed out of the house and into the street rather lightsomely.

At the gate in going I remember stopping to look back at the house; and I see it yet made more lasting in recollection by my father standing in the open door under the low portico. It will not be hard to understand what brought and held him there while I remained in sight.

A one-story, weather-boarded log building, squat on the ground, small windows, the glass of minimum panes; a narrow hall cutting it in the centre; at the west end, a parlor; at the east, a sitting-room; back of the parlor, the library; the hall terminating in a dining-room; behind the main building, separated from it by a porch-

like covered way, the kitchen; the whole fronting southwardly—such was the residence.

The lot thus occupied was one of the right-angle triangles on Massachusetts Avenue, and a large part garden, a larger part orchard. The yard in front was interspersed with cherry-trees and rose-bushes. In the extreme southwest corner stood the gate out of which, the memorable day of which I am speaking, I passed into the world. The avenue formed the hypotenuse of the spacious triangle.

What made that humble home so dear to me that when I think of it now I feel a softening of the tear-ducts and a hardening in the throat?

Father, mother — the time had long gone since I refused the word to her who had so wisely replaced my mother in fact—brothers of the old family and brother and sister of the new had dwelt there with me. Still, that is not wholly satisfying. To find the perfect answer, I have to go deep. Here it is, nothing simpler when at last reached—it was the life of daily passage under that roof.

The housekeeping had been exquisite, the hours easy and natural, and without hectoring or scolding. We had known but one despotic law—that we should be present and ready for meals. Often as it pleased us, we had attended church. Every nook and cranny had been free to us.

Of the manual labor to be done the sufficiency had been scant. My brother and I had taken care of the garden, planted the trees, fed the cows, sawed the wood, and brought it in.

A nobler soul than that elder brother never was. His affection for me had in it something sisterly—it was so tender, patient, and invariably forgiving. I believe my punishments hurt him more than me.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

But of all that went to make pleasant life there nothing returns to me so delightfully as my father's part. I have spoken of his love for literature. It was little short of a passion, and he stinted himself in many ways to gratify it. He was a subscriber to all the great British quarterly magazines, and bought the best editions of the best books. The efforts he made to impart his feelings for them to us were untiring. Of contemporary writers, Macaulay commanded his highest admiration. The *Essays*, he declared, were the perfection of English. The impatience with which he awaited the arrival of the *Edinburgh Review* was undisguised; and if the number, at last to hand, contained a paper of Macaulay's, he plunged into it as a hungry child falls to over a bowl of bread-and-milk. Finished, then came one of what we called his readings.

In the summer those readings were given irregularly. They were rather sovereign graces reserved for winter evenings, and then he was accustomed to favor us two or three times a week. We prepared for them. One of us brought in the wood and piled it against the foot of the mantel in the sitting-room. The fireplace was broad and high, and the hearth a real old-fashioned, pioneer hearth. Except as it has been perpetuated in verse and story, its like is vanishing, if not entirely lost. Beginning with the laying of the back-log, the making the fire was an art calling for skill; then, in its initial state of smoke and crackle, the table was rolled forward, the lamp adjusted, and the easy-chair put in place. What matter if outside the snow grizzled the world or the wind blew distempered down to zero? Presently the blaze broke out, the hearth reddened, a new light leaped along the low ceiling and over the curtains of the bed in the corner, and summer shut the doors against the uninvited winter at its back. We were ready; so was the reader.

My father had a face complementary of a beautiful head. A more serviceable voice for the carriage of delicate feeling I never heard. It was of all the middle tones, and remarkably sensitive to the touch of the thought to be rendered. Rather weak for denunciation, in pathetic passages it was like a master ballad-singer's. The featurings and eye-rolling, the mouthing and falsetto tricks of the professional recitationist he abhorred, saying they were unnatural and distractive. I have heard three men whose faces in animated speech suffused with glow suggestive of transfiguration—S. S. Prentiss, Edward A. Hannegan, and David Wallace.

It should not be inferred that in his readings my father confined himself to Macaulay; he gave us the choicest of everything, though, as with all who find pleasure in general literature, he had his favorites. He delighted, for example, in the *Essays of Elia*; Shakespeare and Milton he regarded with a kind of awe. It was from him I first had the full effects of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" and "Childe Harold." He fixed my standard of pulpit eloquence by the sermons of Dr. Chalmers, Robert Hall, Bossuet, and Bourdaloue. Once he gave an evening to Thucydides, and so powerful was his rendition of the retreat of the Athenians from Syracuse that it has since been one of my exemplars in historical writing. Nor have I yet lost the impression he made on me by Bancroft's exquisite story of the Jesuits in New France. In a word, by his reading he relieved every masterly production to which he addressed himself of heaviness, or, rather, he brought it down to my perfect comprehension.

These readings, it should be further said, did not always occupy the whole of the evenings. My brother and I were frequently required to take the floor and conclude them with declamations. The method pur-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sued at such times permitted us to go through our respective exercises once without interruption and as best we could; after which we were subjected to criticisms covering every part of each performance from the first to the last bow. Of the parts, in our father's opinion, particularly objectionable, repetitions were had until they often ran into laborious drilling. His most peremptory requirement was that we should speak every word distinctly. A man might be awkward in manner, he argued, careless in dress, homely in feature, false in premise, illogical, even ungrammatical, yet a good speaker, if he only enunciated clearly, and was in earnest.

The paternal law allowed us to select the pieces in which we were to appear. If they were unfamiliar to the grave president, he called for the book and held it on us; if we halted in the delivery, he turned us down summarily. On such occasions the audience was privileged to laugh at our discomfiture. Ere long we got beyond "Hohenlinden" and "Marco Bozzaris," and, growing ambitious, advanced to longer themes; such as, in prose, extracts from Webster, Emmet's "Vindication," Phillips's "Washington"; in poetry, Collins's "Ode to the Passions," Byron's "Corsair," Scott's "Marmion" and the "Battle of Beal-un-duine."

I dwell on these things to make it easy to see what life was in the old homestead, and that it was not merely well-regulated and comfortable in the creature point of view, but had an educational side as well. So, too, a stranger will better understand how much I was losing now that I was to cut loose and take care of myself; that, besides the loss of home in the purest sense of the term, I was abandoning the oversight and care of a preceptor whose capacity to instruct was quickened marvellously by his natural affection. What were the

## LEW WALLACE

new associations awaiting me? Out of the gate into the street, never to return except as guest! I very much fear there was lacking in me the proper appreciation of the solemnity and uncertainties of the crises.

# AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

## VIII

Enter office of Robert S. Duncan—Buy a gun—Preparation for authorship—Study of grammar—Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*—Begin *The Fair God*—Dancing-lessons.

THE first thing I betook myself to the office of the clerk of the county, then occupied—and most worthily—by the late Robert S. Duncan, still a familiar name in Indianapolis. After telling that gentleman what had happened, I applied for employment. He gave me a quizzical look and asked:

“You want to settle down, do you?”

I replied, “Yes—if I can.”

“You can. Come with me.”

He took me into an arched vault constructed for the security of books and papers.

“I'll set you to making complete records.”

“I know nothing about the work, Mr. Duncan.”

“Of course you don't. I'll show you.”

Then, with a patience impossible to forget, he stood by me at a table and initiated me into the mysteries of captions, pleadings, orders, judgments, dates of filing, saying at the end of the lesson, “Now, I'll give you ten cents for every hundred words you write; so that how much you'll make will depend upon yourself.”

With that he left me, and presently I earned my first dollar; after which I knew myself secure of bread, and that if, as many believe, the tailor makes the man, it was in my power to be renewed every quarter in the year. The feeling was most comfortable.

Mrs. Elizabeth Knowland, a motherly old lady with whom I had long been a favorite, kept a half-hotel on Washington Street. Miss Jane, her daughter, was music-loving and socially very popular. Besides playing the piano with grace, she always commanded an audience as a singer. It was at one of her "sociables" I first met Lovell H. Rousseau, then a state senator, afterwards captain in the Second Indiana Volunteers, in which capacity he greatly distinguished himself at Buena Vista; still later, in the War of the Rebellion.

One cannot reform himself in a day or week. The old habits persisted in following me into the vault, and pulling at me. I was watchful against dropping back. After the first settlement with my employer, I paid my landlady and had eleven dollars over. The money made me restless and uneasy, and burned in my pocket. I could not keep it, but bought a rifle. Mr. Duncan was the best squirrel and turkey shot in the county. To my great happiness, he approved the purchase and invited me to the woods with him. We returned with good strings of game. My shooting seemed to give me a lift in his estimation. On parting, he asked me:

"What are you going to do with your squirrels?"

"Take them home," I replied.

"That's right"; then he added, quickly: "A gun is a great thing to run away with its owner. Suppose you always come to me when you want to take it out. It may be I can go with you."

I saw in an instant that he understood the struggle upon me and was seeking to be helpful on my side. The management was cunning. In a time surprisingly short the rifle had lapsed into a thing purely ornamental.

Several months passed, and, becoming expert at record-making, I found that beginning nine o'clock in the morning and quitting at five in the evening, with a



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

break-off for dinner, I could write easily three thousand words; or, in direct phrase, that it was in my power to make eighteen dollars a week, and more by night-work. This appeared good, but there was a result even better. I began to be capable of continuous daily labor and of being stern with myself. Nevertheless, a curious discontent crept in on me. Theretofore books had been sedative in their effect; while reading, I had always been able to curl up like a caterpillar asleep or flatten out like a lizard in the sun; now the sight of an old favorite or the title-page of a new publication made me restless. Was I losing my taste? That would have been a calamity; and the very fear of it moved me to a closer study of the matter. I noticed, among other things, the act of composition produced the quieting effect formerly the result of reading. At last the real cause of the malady uncovered itself. In connection with impulses to try something as a writer, I was not doing anything in preparation for the work. There were hours—whole evenings—possible of devotion to the self-education which was now all I could promise myself—time separable without filching from the forenoons and afternoons demanded for actual bread-getting. And I was sharp enough to see the opportunities held in the lock-up of those precious hours. What should I do with them? The question followed me, obtruded itself incongruously, now at the point of the pen on the page of a record, now in the street, now while Miss Jane's skilful fingers drew melodious volumes from the depths of the music behind the ivories of her piano; in the end it lodged itself in my conscience, a prickle keeping it in a state of incessant irritation. To lay the unrest thus occasioned I reached a resolution, though with misgivings of will-power enough to keep it, in the first instance, and of ability to realize what I hoped from the effort, in the next. This

was nothing more than a reversion to Professor Hos-hour's idea of one teaching himself.

The veteran professor's insistence that all scholars are self-made, school and college courses being but preparatories for the great, final accomplishment lying beyond, was too broad for perfect appreciation, certainly too unqualified for adoption by a young person so unadvanced as I knew myself. Yet the idea seemed to admit of a limited application to my case. It were worth the while, at all events, to seize some of the hours vanishing so unprofitably and give them to an attempt at making myself sufficiently acquainted with the English language to write it grammatically. Then out of the bone-yard of old school-books in the homestead I resurrected a Lindley Murray, and, with the aid of a lamp, in the hush and must of the vault which was the scene of my daily work, I took off my coat, so to speak, and gave an evening to an honest trial of study. It surprised me to find that I could really penetrate to the meaning of rules heretofore opaque as millstones. To be sure, this was one of the results of the whole mind given to a task; nevertheless, I shut the book encouraged and quieted in conscience. The next evening went the same way—and the next; then, ere long, came the habitude; and I made headway—no pun intended—leaving nothing behind not worked out to a fair understanding.

Further on it occurred to me, why not write? All that I worked out of the grammar would then have the reinforcement of practical application. Instead of parsing somebody else, I could parse myself.

By happy chance, one of the latest acquisitions to my father's library had been Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*, a book of such wonderful brilliance that I devoured it, preface, text, notes, and appendix. As a history, how delightful it was! as a tale, how rich in attractive ele-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ments!—adventure, exploration, combat, heroisms, oppositions of fate and fortune, characters for sympathy, characters for detestation, civilization and religion in mortal issue. Who, intent upon it, could relax his inthralment long enough to splatter the narrative with doubts respecting its truthfulness? Small invention was required to develop the possibilities of the theme—tears for Montezuma, and for Cortés admiration overriding maledictions. The progression, in my hand necessarily slow, would require years and years. What matter? The subject could not tire me, neither would it leaden with monotony. Besides, and most conclusive, nobody, to my knowledge, had attempted to dress its history in any of the liveries of fiction. It could not be handled except originally.

These were some of the considerations which determined me—I would write, and the Conquest of Mexico should be my theme.

The conclusion may be thought a trifle by the tyro, since it would seem that I had only to find an easy-chair, and sit, and propel a pen. But with me *The Man-at-Arms* was an experience. It taught me that there was a deal to be done preliminarily. There was a plot to be invented and arranged; that is, taking Prescott's narrative for skeleton, a mass of successive incidents had to be devised and applied as flesh to the skeleton. Then there were characters to be chosen. Of the Aztecs, whom should I use? Of the Spaniards, whom? Next, how can one depict a dead people with so much as an approach to realism unless he first make himself thoroughly acquainted with them—their customs, costumes, sociology, and their political and religious systems? Of the races to figure in the plot he must have all the knowledge obtainable; so of the geography, topography, and vegetation of their country. Here, an



especial need, I had to familiarize myself with a great capital city, its palaces and temples, its thoroughfares, all *à la Venitia*; otherwise how could I take a stranger in and out? In such points lie the colors, without which a historical story shall be lifeless as a cosmograph. At that time, perhaps, I could not have stated these things as they are given here; yet I saw them and felt their significance.

Prescott is generous in the citation of his authorities. From his notes, one and another, a student can make a list of all the books upon the conquest, with the names and, in instances, biographies of their authors.<sup>1</sup> I made such a list very early, and was particularly drawn to an account purporting to have been by Bernal Diaz del Castillo, one of the *conquistadores*; and it struck me that what he had to say must have a sanction by virtue of his opportunities as an eye-witness. To get his book took time; at last I had it; and then the two, Prescott and Diaz, were always within touch when needed. Later on, during sojourns in Washington, I annotated the authorities in the Congressional Library, Hervara, Sahagún, and Torquemada.

Such was the inception of *The Fair God*.

It was begun,<sup>2</sup> I well remember, in the vault of the clerk's office in Indianapolis one winter night when

"The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold."

<sup>1</sup> Of the three volumes of Prescott, I have now but two. The hardest usage fell upon the first. Many of its fly-leaves, margins, and vacant spaces were chock-full of my notes in narrow compression, not a few of them in Spanish; for eventually the spur of necessity drove me to acquire the language. Very naturally I set store by the volume; yet it is missing, and search and inquiry for it have been in vain. By this time, doubtless, the unscrupulous relic-hunter who purloined it feels secure in its possession.

<sup>2</sup> The blank-book, very long and almost as broad, in which the first writing was done is still one of the curios of our study.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

There was no thought of publication in the beginning, and during the years until its completion the work continued what it was at first—my reserve pastime. While it was in hand there was always something for me to turn to. It was like the attendant of the Aztec king, in service to amuse and entertain his master. In the cars, at way-stations, of evenings here and there, in breaks of business, I had only to take paper and pencil and my entertainment was ready. In anticipation of such opportunities, it grew a habit with me after a while to carry scraps of paper in my pocket to receive such jottings as appeared worthy a place in the manuscript; or, wanting them, I utilized envelopes and blank spaces in letters for the purpose. A singular facility was the outgrowth. The last writing might have ended in the middle of a sentence, yet weeks after, whether on the street or in an assemblage, I could begin where the stop occurred and go on exactly as if the manuscript were before me.

References to *The Fair God* will be met hereafter; for the present, it may be useful to others who, in the routine of daily tasks, dream dreams and open and shut the windows of imagination to remark that the story and the work upon it went, as it were, hand in hand with the grammar until the latter could be safely laid aside.

To leave here an impression that I sank into a recluse and gave myself entirely to study would be deceptive. In confessing a love of amusement, it is only saying truth that I hunted it diligently and in all its lawful diversities.

In the winter of '43 a wandering dancing-master opened school in Indianapolis, greatly to the delight of the young society. Together with the usual Terpsichorean accomplishments, he taught a new science—the

LEW WALLACE

*Science of Manners.* The worthy professor was his own object-lesson. He clung to the old fashions, wore frilled shirt - bosoms, silk stockings, and pumps ablaze with silver buckles. He also made his own music. "The Fisher's Hornpipe" with which he sped a quadrille was tearing enough to have quickened the bones of the unknown in a catacomb. He enrolled me a pupil of his academy; and, simple as the topic looks, I am bound to say there was never such a tempest of fun as when he called us out one by one to practise bowing, hat salutes, and posturing seated and standing. Since the day of his advent, I have read and heard much of Colonial society, Colonial dames, Colonial beaus, and of their stately mannerisms. No one, I yet think, ever reproduced them to the life like our old Do-ci-do. In a minuet he always made me think of France and the king in a ballroom imposing form upon his courtiers—so solemn and grandiose was his deportment.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### IX

The military companies—"Marion Rifles"—Sham battle—Henry Clay—Reporter for legislature, 1844-5—Studies law with his father.

A MILITARY company known as the "City Greys" had been organized in Indianapolis under the captaincy of Thomas A. Morris,<sup>1</sup> then a recent graduate of the academy at West Point. Its success led to another company, of which I had the honor to be elected second sergeant. When mounted upon my sleeve, the chevron was to me significant of a dignity to excite the jealousy of the great Caius Julius. Nor did any of us think of unfitness attaching to our captain because to don his uniform on parade-days he must needs step down from a tailor's bench. We adopted the name "Marion Rifles."

The differences between the companies were not of a kind to foster what the French call *camaraderie*. The Greys were solid men, verging many of them upon middle life; the enlisted of the Rifles were mostly incapable of mustaches. The uniform of the Greys was of rich cloth; that of the Rifles consisted of a cap, a cotton hunting-shirt, blue and yellow fringed, and fashioned after the style bequeathed to the American people by General Daniel Morgan of Revolutionary renown. The Greys carried muskets with bayonets; the Rifles, Hall's patent breech-loaders. The Greys timed

<sup>1</sup> In the Civil War, Major-General Thomas A. Morris, to whom all the credit of the early successes in West Virginia was really due.

their steps to the sonorous music of a brass-band; the Rifles were contented with the fife and drum. The Rifles despised the aristocratic airs of the Greys; the Greys laughed at the Rifles, and the good-natured contempt could have been endured had they stopped with it. Their last insult was the nickname "Arabs."

We waited a long time for a chance to punish the Greys. At last a sham battle between the companies was hippodromed in celebration of January 8th, with Washington Street for scene of action. We were posted at the intersection of Meridian Street, facing eastward; while, turning from Delaware up by the court-house, the enemy moved to the attack in column of sections, their band playing vociferously. Their appearance was beautiful; and it was then I first knew what inspiration there is in white handkerchiefs shaken out by fair hands from overlooking windows. The Greys opened with volleys; we replied, lying down and firing at will. All went well until in the crisis of the engagement our captain forgot to order the retreat provided for in the schedule of manœuvres. The *mêlée* that ensued was tremendous. Wads flew like bullets. We shot one man, took several prisoners, and were left masters of the field. At sight of the haughty foe in flight I yelled my throat into tatters. The incident is, of course, trivial; yet it was of consequence to me. It put a final finish upon the taste for military life by turning it into a genuine passion. It was my initiation into the Ancient and Honorable Order of Soldiers.

About that time a first volume of Scott's *Infantry Tactics*, published by order of Lewis Cass, Secretary of War, fell into my hands. The find of a diamond in the mud had not made me happier. Everything—work, visitation, rest, sleep—was put aside; so that soon I saw myself taking on the graces of a drill-master.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Those were proud moments when the captain condescended to advise with me about points determinable in the school of the soldier.

Of the things of this period to make a lasting impression upon me, not the least by any means was the coming of Henry Clay to Indianapolis. To realize the gravity of this event, the generations risen since 1844, when it took place, must be reminded of the greatness of the man, and that of all living at the time none had the same hold upon his contemporaries—none was so utterly detested on the one hand, none so nearly adored on the other.

Mr. Clay was “swinging around the circle,” a candidate for the presidency. When it went abroad that he would come to Indianapolis, there were no bounds to the expectations excited. The high grounds at the east end were selected for the function. That the thousands might see and hear him an open platform of unusual elevation was built. His entry was along the national road of which he had been projector and congressional godfather. A barbecue was celebrated in his honor; that is, a herd of fat cattle was slaughtered and roasted over fires in superheated pits. Both the military companies escorted the distinguished guest to the mansion of Governor Noble.

The crowd was up to the most sanguine hope; and when at length there was not in all the multitude a hungry man, woman, or child, the speaking began.

Mr. Clay was of a personality once seen never to be forgotten. Tall, slender, graceful, he had, besides, the air majestic which kings affect, imagining it exclusive property. Yet he was not a handsome man. The largeness of his lower features was a serious detraction. His forehead was retreating; the skull narrowed in its rise to the crown; his ears were loby, his eyes heavily

overshaded, his cheek-bones of almost aboriginal prominence.

Throughout Mr. Clay's performance my eyes scarcely left his countenance, which, as he proceeded, sank from sight until, by the familiar optical illusion, nothing of it remained but the mouth, and that kept enlarging and widening until it seemed an elastic link holding the ears together. Indeed, at this late writing, my one distinct recollection of the man and his speech is the mouth and its capacity for infinite distention.

The visitation is historically known as a failure. Mr. Clay arrived in bad humor, spoke in bad humor, and departed in bad humor. It was only natural that his auditors should catch his mood.

The legislature (1844-5) brought me an interesting experience. Some work of mine descriptive of social events in the city having drawn the favorable attention of Mr. John D. Defrees, editor and proprietor of the *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, the recognized organ of the Whig Party in Indiana, he proposed that I should report the House proceedings for his paper. The employment was novel and the pay to my satisfaction, so I gladly accepted the offer, Mr. Duncan kindly agreeing to reserve my place in his office.

At the end of the session I had been initiated into legislative methods, besides being wiser in parliamentary law. If not an expert in the subtleties of the manual, such as the previous question, the amendments, and the precedencies, I have congratulated myself often at finding how easy it is to brush up on the law in anticipation of an immediate need.

I have many pleasant recollections of that reporting, not the least of which was the somewhat lucrative business I drove doing small literary jobs for members of the House. They had resolutions to be drawn, com-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

mittee reports wanting revision, bills to be formulated. In every such body there are the incapables and the capables and the capables weak or lazy. My patrons were of the first and third classes, and, as a rule, I found them liberal paymasters.

My eighteenth year seemed a long term, given, as it was, the days to work and the nights to study. I could, in likelihood, have found some relief against the tedium in society, but its charms passed me by. To be perfectly candid, I had doubts of the welcome in wait for me. My reputation for outlawry had not been lived down. Of the prophets who had appointed me to the gallows there were too many still in the flesh loaded with reminiscences.

Days off were infrequent, but still given to the old haunts along the creek and river, for there I could be alone. Even then, however, the rod or the gun was counterbalanced by a book in pocket. If the squirrels were shy or the bass out of humor, they were not allowed to spoil the outing—Byron and Scott were just as good in the greenwood as in a furnished library.

Meantime *The Fair God* grew in interest as well as bulk. Montezuma, Guatamozin, Mualox, Hualpa, and Tecetl had admitted me to intimacy; and on the sea, much more than were clairvoyant spectres, Cortés and his *cidelantados* passed the time not devoted to their steeds watching the Tabascan coast and speculating upon the mines and *haciendos* awaiting them in the vast perspective of the unknown called Mexico.

Now, too, more distinctly than ever, I felt the impulses of manhood in near approach. The ego in me began its wrestle with the question, probably the most serious of life to every one not in condition to exist without labor—what am I to do with myself? A fine speech, a bit of good writing, something brave read of

in the world of action, had often a disturbing effect; and then, were I in the vault, work upon the record under hand turned into a process like nothing I could think of so much as pouring precious wine into a rat-hole. In the years to come, who would ask for the book or for the clerk whose days it had converted? Was I to be always a copyist?

It happened that my elder brother had already entered himself with my father a student of law. Why should I not do likewise?

With what may be called the economy of the law office I had been familiar from childhood, and its routine had always appeared to me the champion horror of horrors. That, however, was but one side of the practice—its ugly side—and I shrank from it. On the other hand, often as I held the opposite at angles for study the routine vanished. Appearances in court, for instance, with their accessories—judge, jury, the public, and the commonwealth behind them—was there an occupation so fascinating to a soul confident in itself to the superlative of vanity? Then, dropping the mere personal consideration, was there a progressive movement in organized society or a useful scheme involving co-operative energy, from a town ordinance to a continental railway, that had not its fashioning and finish from a lawyer? And as to the stepping-stones in politics—well, ideas of the sort caught me, and I determined to take to the law.

Now my father was a methodical instructor. With him it was not enough to acquaint one's self with general principles; the law, he held, had a language of its own, and to be an advocate, especially in argument to a judge, ability to speak that language fluently and with correctness was indispensable; so, by his requirement, the student must begin by reducing Blackstone



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

to questions and answers, then, by memorizing, with recitations to him on Saturdays. In comparison with such tasks, how trifling the tax upon the memorative powers of an actor! Yet the system attracted me. There were flattering possibilities in it, and I joined my brother in the study.

Thereafter, for a year or more, the flow of life became regular, each day in incident like its predecessor: breakfast; then the dissection of Blackstone or *Chitty's Pleading*, in the method mentioned, continuing through the day; dinner and supper; and night and *The Fair God*, with book diversities. Not seldom day, stealing softly through the windows of the office, found me asleep in a chair. When a bill fell due, or there was need of clothes, I presented myself to Mr. Duncan, and always, with unfailing good-nature, he pointed to the vault and bade me help myself.

In the spring following my entry as a student I commenced *practice*—so, by grace, I call appearances before justices of the peace, pettifogging being a term obnoxious to all *lawyers*.

## X

First law practice—War with Mexico—Interest in war news—  
Examined for attorney's license—First conflicts with the Mexi-  
cans—Captain Charles May—Governor Whitcomb—Judge Isaac  
Blackford.

To practise in a justice's court with so little preparation, assurance in large measure was more needful than a formal license; and, looking coolly back from my present stand-point, it must be confessed that I came to my full share of the quality early. The business brought me was of the misdemeanor class in criminal law, and now and then a civil cause with bad feeling between the parties for motive. Of defences in proceedings for violation of city ordinances I made a specialty. Sometimes I went into the country. Sometimes, also, I confronted old lawyers whose very justifiable contempt for my presumption I offset with an audacity they did not always know how to meet. It is creditable to the average judgment that their sympathy, where it has room for play, is generally with young fellows offering front to professional seniors. Most frequently, however, my antagonist was a John Quarles, about my age. He was a great lawyer in promise. I doubt if he could talk as fast and loud, yet he had from nature a managing knack that kept me in wholesome awe of him. Usually we had good audiences. Indeed, we agreed that there were instances in which our clients resorted to the law quite as much to hear the enemy abused as for the profit discernible in the proceeding. Quarles's early death was a poignant sorrow to all who knew him.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

So, in the spring of '46, the summons of need which required me at the clerk's office was of lessening frequency. A pettifogger of some local renown, I was actually making money; yet, withal, I pounded away at the text-books and *The Fair God*, and was feeling the ease of mind which is a first cousin of contentment, when an unexpected interruption came along.

A history of the war with Mexico would be a departure from the purpose of this work. While full of honor to our arms, it now excites no interest, not even in military circles. My connection with it, moreover, was very humble, insomuch that I view the term of service it had from me as a mere passing adventure, and prefer to so treat it. The most I dare with the general occurrence is, as I go along, a daub here and a scumble there, much as impressionists paint pictures.

That our government would be eventually drawn into the Texan revolution was in the air, a perceptible haze along the horizon south; and if, through the haze, statesmen of the South saw political advantages—the extension of slavery, for instance, and additional votes in the United States Senate—and reached out to realize them, *that* was not treasonable. At length, following the lead of France, Congress, in 1839, recognized the independence of Texas.

For ten years, then, annexation vexed the country. Should the new republic be taken into the Union? Just as the decade was expiring the gate was opened to her. There had been plenty of time for the American public to inform itself upon the question.

It is my opinion now that the war with Mexico, the first consequence of the admission of Texas as a state, was justifiable; this because of a fact lost sight of in the wrangling of the period. Certain European powers coveted the new republic. France went so far in her

intrigue as to make recognition dependent upon an engagement that the latter should not join the United States,<sup>1</sup> and the proposal was energetically supported by an influential party of Texans. Which was preferable—Texas a state of the Union, or Texas a subject of a French protectorate?<sup>2</sup>

If our government was forcing war with Mexico, as is charged, it was certainly easy-going. It tried negotiation, but the Mexicans were violent. In August, four months after annexation, General Zachary Taylor, sailing from New Orleans, established a camp at Corpus Christi. His "Army of Occupation," as he facetiously called his command, consisted of part of a regiment of infantry. Shortly after he reported a Mexican army, under General Arista, moving from Monterey to Matamoras. This was menacing; so, in October, Taylor was reinforced with five regiments of regular infantry and some cavalry and artillery, most of the latter without guns. Early in February he set out for the Rio Grande, instructed carefully to avoid a first act of hostility. In March, he was at Point Isabel. On March 28th, his army pitched its tents on the Rio Grande opposite Matamoras. That is to say, from March 1, 1845, when annexation was resolved on by

<sup>1</sup> President Polk's first annual message.

<sup>2</sup> "But Texas had passed definitely and finally beyond the control of Mexico; and the practical issue was, whether we should incorporate her in the Union or leave her to drift in uncertain currents—possibly to form European alliances, which we should afterwards be compelled in self-defence to destroy. An astute statesman of that period summed up the whole case when he declared that it was wiser policy to annex Texas, and accept the issue of immediate war with Mexico, than to leave Texas in nominal independence to involve us probably in ultimate war with England. The entire history of subsequent events has vindicated the wisdom, the courage, and the statesmanship with which the Democratic party dealt with this question in 1844."—*James G. Blaine*.



Congress, it took more than one year to push a small column of troops to the farther edge of the land in debate. And it was not a far cry, either.

Returning now to myself, it will be difficult, I think, for persons not themselves filled ardently with a spirit of adventure to understand the passionate interest I took in the Texan business from the time of General Taylor's departure from New Orleans. His destination was unknown to the public further than that it was some point on the coast of Texas.

But where? The coast was long, and the stopping-places few—Galveston, Corpus Christi, Brazos de Santiago, and the mouth of the Rio Grande. If he disembarked at any point west of Corpus Christi, it was understood that the Mexicans must fight or surrender their opposition. The uncertainty was more than interesting—it plunged me into a fever of excitement. I wanted the war, thinking of little else, and I went about hunting news and debating the probabilities. I haunted the *Journal* office, squeezing its exchanges for all they had to say upon the subject. My pockets were plethoric with newspapers, especially those of New Orleans and New York. Every bit of discussion, every scrap of intelligence was eagerly devoured. Where would the expedition land? Denial and qualification aside, I was hungry for war. Had I not been reading about it all my life? And had not all I had read about it wrought in me that battle was the climax of the sublime and terrible, and that without at least one experience of the kind no life could be perfect?

At length General Taylor was heard from; he had landed at Corpus Christi, on the western shore of the Nueces Bay. Descriptions of the camp established there were suggestive of live-oak groves in festoons of flying mosses, and of gardens gay with tropical enrichments—

all well enough but for the air of permanency that pervaded everything. When people once get settled in paradise it takes wrenching to get them away. This, together with the other circumstances, that the camp was pitched on the very edge of the territory in dispute, left the main question absolutely void of favorable probabilities. It seemed that the event most within my wish depended upon the Mexicans, and I despaired—so small was my faith in their hardihood. With the wane of faith in a belligerent outcome, I returned to study.

To become a recognized lawyer every student in that day was required to procure a license, issuable or not after an examination for which he was free to apply to the Supreme Court or to the judge of a Circuit Court. A license from the former was preferable, partly because of the greater honor attaching to it, but chiefly from the fact that the privileges conferred were more extensive. Enrolment in the Supreme Court entitled an attorney to rights of appearance in all the subordinate courts of the state. I determined to try for admission there.

The making ready comprehended a thorough review of the text-books and a degree of familiarity with the revised statutes. Who could tell through what lanes and byways, not to speak of travelled roads, the learned examining judge would lead me? I addressed a note of application to the court, and received notice that a hearing would be allowed applicants on a given day. A room in the state-house was designated for the purpose.

My confidence in the result was not overweening. I was strong in Kent and Blackstone, and fairly so in Starkie, but weak in Chitty and Equity Pleading. A consciousness of this sapped my confidence, and as the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

day of trial drew near I grew nervous and cowardly. It was one thing to beard a justice of the peace in his den, and quite another to confront a chief-justice of the Supreme Court. Still, I believe the venture would have gone well but for an intervention which, if it did not actually rob me of much I really knew, plunged me into a state of indifference as to the outcome. The effect of the incident may be likened to that of a sudden squall upon a small boat under too much sail.

Word came up from Texas that General Taylor had razed his beautiful camp on the Nueces Bay, and, with a force enlarged to the proportions of a respectable army, was in full march for the Rio Grande River. This was the occurrence so malefic upon me.

That there would be war was no longer doubtful. The Mexicans were in force waiting—so much was already known. I was to have my wish. There would be a battle, then other battles. Hurrah! Of what consequence was a license to practise law? How petty the soul which could be screwed down to prefer a court to a camp! A light went out that night in my father's office. The books which had occupied me became offensive. I shut them, and laid them away—perhaps forever.

The order for the movement of the army westward had proceeded from the War Department in the beginning of February. On the map the space to be traversed seemed trifling; yet the month went out, and nothing determinate. Then the middle of March. Why the delay? I was hot with impatience. It looked as if a snail could have made the distance in the time. I knew nothing then of the desert nature of the country through which the columns toiled—desert in everything but the tufted gray grasses which at that season lent character and complexion to the land.

At last news—this time positive. Taylor had reached Point Isabel. Then—in a day or two, I think—his army was in camp on the Rio Grande opposite Matamoras.

In what followed I lost not a point—not the most trivial incident. The insolent protest of the mayor of Matamoras—the fire at Point Isabel, and its extinguishment by our cavalry—the blockade of the mouth of the river by our vessels—the hasty erection of Fort Brown—the correspondence with the Mexican general Ampudia, so bombastic on his side, so dignified on ours—the arrival of reinforcements at Matamoras—then Arista's assumption of command of the Mexican army—these, and more like them, I stuffed into my budget of evidence of a collision inevitable and close at hand. Presently General Taylor, leaving a garrison in Fort Brown, marched his army down to Point Isabel. Simultaneously Arista crossed the Rio Grande and cut communication with the fort. Then I knew Taylor was bound to make an effort to save the garrison, and that on his return for that purpose the opposing armies must meet.

I read of the murder of Colonel Cross, and of the mysterious disappearance of Lieutenant Porter and his twelve infantrymen out on a reconnoissance. Then came the story of Captain Thornton, told with sad but curious details—how he set out with a squadron of dragoons looking for the enemy—how while working through a close chaparral he found himself penned in with lariats tied to trees in front and rear—how, after a gallant fight, he and another captain surrendered. The country, all unused to war, stood aghast, and vented its spleen on the Mexicans by denouncing them for treachery. As if ambushes were new things in war!

These preliminaries, so wholly unrelieved on our side,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

were of good consequence, notwithstanding. They induced the government to lend a willing ear to General Taylor's call for reinforcements.

News travelled slower in that day than in this. There was an interval without intelligence from the army. That something of importance had happened everybody knew. Taylor was not a man to let an opportunity slip him. There had been a battle, but the uncertainty deepened the intensity of feeling. All the United States may be imagined on tiptoe, holding breath to hear.

Then came the report of Palo Alto, clouded by the death of Major Ringgold. The States breathed long enough to shout victory without relaxing their anxiety. The enemy had simply retired to another position.

Resaca de la Palma occurred next day, and it was decisive. The Mexicans never stopped flight until securely behind the yellow flood of the Rio Grande. Then all the land between that river and the Nueces ceased to be debatable. It was reduced to possession, and there is no title so perfect as that of conquest.

Gallantries! Why, that battle of Resaca was illuminated with them. I thrill yet thinking of young Churchill lugging his eighteen-pounders from position to position with oxen, geeing and whoa-hawing them along the smoky, grape-swept prairie merrily as a Wisconsin logger. And there was May's heroism. Some one has pronounced it a myth; if so, it is one of the myths that do men good, and ought for that reason to be perpetuated. An infantry officer was forming his company to charge a battery, when down came May at the head of his dragoons, crying, "Hold!—hold on there! Let me draw their fire!" Next moment he was amid the gunners, with La Vega a prisoner. Prior to that he had been Captain May, but the people drew him from the mass and promoted him to Charley—Charley May.

At breakfast a few days after the battle of Resaca some one said there was a rumor in town of a call for troops by the government. This was what I had been hoping and expecting. I could scarcely wait the hour when the adjutant-general of the state might be encountered in his office. Then, promptly, I interviewed the gentleman.

Prior to that day the adjutant-generalcy had been bare of importance, because without patronage or a decent salary the title was its only attraction. The office had its habitat in the state-house. I call it "office" in lack of another word more exactly descriptive. There being no organized militia, why an office, or, for that matter, an adjutant-general?

David Reynolds, the incumbent, was a good-looking person, stout, rubicund, affable, who had not yet appeared in uniform. He knew nothing military, and, to his credit, he made no pretension to such knowledge. His appreciation of the title even needed cultivation. He was intelligent and willing to learn. I found him in a flustered state not unlike that of a mother hen unexpectedly visited by a marauding hawk. There were a hundred things to do—blanks to be prepared, books to be opened—everything, indeed, that ought to have been done long before, and that would have been done but for lack of the needful appropriation. A corresponding inexperience on the part of the governor heightened the confusion of the staff-officers.

A statue in bronze of James Whitcomb, governor of Indiana in 1846, is a conspicuous object in connection with the soldiers' monument at Indianapolis. As a tribute to a citizen who happened to be chief magistrate at the outbreak of the war with Mexico, it is well deserved. I had the good-fortune to know him, though at a distance. His position was too exalted for familiar

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

acquaintance with so young a man. He was a lover of books. His fine library was useful as well as ornamental. It was a certificate that his reputation for learning and scholarly attainments was deserved.

There were certain peculiarities of taste and habit which impressed the governor upon me. He was a musician who, like Thomas Jefferson, did not disdain when in privacy to ease himself of care by the exorcism there is in a violin masterfully dominated. He knew how to pass from a melody of Tom Moore's to a plantation jig, and to bring out the differences between them. He was also a smoker. With him there was no obscuration to thought in the ring blown dexterously from his lighted cigar. Smoking was his only dissipation. He excelled in exhausting a cigar to its least possible dimensions; sometimes he thrust a knife-blade into the abbreviated remainder. It was even said he sometimes resorted to a pin.

His picture in the state library is a better likeness of the first war governor than the statue under the monument. If in speaking of him one confines remarks to his abilities as a statesman, the choicest terms of eulogy may be used with propriety; but he was not a soldier.

I found Adjutant-General Reynolds in a mood communicative. The mail of the day preceding had brought the governor an official notice that Congress, besides formally declaring war against Mexico, had appropriated ten million dollars to carry it on, and authorized the president to call out fifty thousand volunteers.

This was great news, and I made haste to ask:

"Will any of the troops be from Indiana?"

"Yes, that's what's bothering me," the general replied. "We are asked to furnish three regiments—and the business is entirely new—no forms, no precedents—nothing for our guidance."



I was shaking with excitement.

"Well," I asked, "can any one raise a company? Or must authority be first had from the governor?"

"I suppose any one can go about it; only when raised it must, of course, be tendered to the governor for regimental assignment and muster-in."

I went out resolved to raise a company, if no one older and better known did not set about it.

By a singular chance, as it appeared to me then, this very satisfactory turn in the Mexican business happened about the time appointed for my ordeal before the Supreme Court. The thought of the latter now set me to shivering. The weeks which should have been devoted, day and night, to persistent review had been taken up with Scott's *Infantry Tactics*. The precious contents of the law-books, when I tried to look back over them, refused to rise at call. What I really knew had become gelatinous pulp in the cells of my brain. To be sure, the reserved right of withdrawal from the examination was still mine; yet I resolved to make the trial. The license, if I won it, would not spoil.

Accordingly, on the day stated, I attended at the state-house. Court was in session, and the bench full. I looked at the array with creeping of the spirit. One of the judges was well known to me, and I to him. Our acquaintance came about in a way to make it lasting.

Some years before, this particular judge had taken lodgings and an office in the mansion-house already spoken of as obstructing the Governor's Circle. Thither his brethren of the ermine, by invitation, were in the habit of flocking for consultation; and a very quiet place it was, except on occasions. The basement of the house was a vast, unlighted cellar, filled with boxes, barrels, and a débris of such varied ins and outs as to be dangerous, if not quite impassable, to the unfamiliar.



It had the reputation, moreover, of being haunted. A workman was said to have been buried in it. Yet a few of us—boys, of course—used it as a rendezvous to amuse ourselves with the judges. When they were assembled, and buried in study or loud in debate, we would raise thunder by punching the floor beneath their feet with scantling and long poles. Their yells but stimulated the charivari. In point of sensitiveness, what is the nerve of an eye worth, and in delicacy what is a Sèvres cup, in comparison with the superfine thing called judicial dignity? With the rush of the tortured, easily heard overhead, we sought our hiding-places and in spasms of delight bided their fierce pursuit. Shall I speak of profanity? And from *them*? But they turned the joke. The sheriff of the court, with a support of bailiffs, lay in wait for us one day. At the first thump of our staves on the floor they seized the doors and, with lanterns, fished us one by one out of the débris. With an inconceivable hardness of heart, the myrmidons took us up-stairs and before the judges. There I made the acquaintance of Isaac Blackford and Charles Dewey, in the annals of Indiana the first, last, and greatest of her old-school judiciary. From that day the reciprocity of recollection between them and myself continued without a break.

I made myself easy as possible until the adjournment of court. The lawyers hustled out of the chamber, and then the judges departed, all but one. An officer remained with him. Looking round, I beheld my fellows of the ordeal, twelve or fifteen in number. We advanced and stood in a body outside the railing. As we did so, I observed the clear, gray eyes of his honor, Isaac Blackford, rest on me with a look so sharp and cold it shot me full of rigors. He had waited a long time for what the baseballists would call his *innings*.

## LEW WALLACE

At last it was come. Would he make a worm of me and thread me on his hook? Was he so mean? Had I believed it, I should not have stayed.

The judge did not make a speech. From his seat he told us to follow an officer.

The room into which we were then taken had been prepared. There were tables and chairs, and in front of each chair writing materials in complement. As we passed in, the bailiff, standing by the door, took our names and gave each of us a package sealed and addressed.

"You will take seats," he said, adding, "I am instructed by the judge to see that you do not communicate with one another. When you finish your answers, put them in envelopes, and seal and direct them and give them to me. You have till court meets in the morning."

The worthy thereupon coolly lit a pipe and took a chair near the door.

I presume the questions furnished the several members of the class were the same in number and purport. We read them, and then began our replies. The silence was broken only by the scratching of pens. At supper-time we were allowed out. About two o'clock in the morning I delivered my contribution to the drowsy detective at the door, and sallied forth, leaving a number of my fellow-sufferers still wrestling with the conundrums.

I was not at all satisfied with my work, and at the foot of the last page appended a note, the flippancy of which makes my face burn as I now write:

*"Hon. Isaac Blackford, Examining Judge:*

"DEAR SIR,—I hope the foregoing answers will be to your satisfaction more than they are to mine; whether they are or not, I shall go to Mexico.

"Respectfully,

LEW WALLACE."

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

If the judge were wanting an excuse to punish me, I had furnished it. Two or three days afterwards I received a notice through the post-office:

“Supreme Court-Room, INDIANAPOLIS.

“*Mr. Lew Wallace :*

“DEAR SIR,—The Court interposes no objection to your going to Mexico. Respectfully,

“ISAAC BLACKFORD.”

The communication was *unaccompanied* with a license.

## XI

Opens recruiting-office in Indianapolis for volunteers for war with Mexico—The company leaves for New Albany *via* Edinburg in wagons—Three Indiana regiments encamped at Camp Clark—Colonel Drake—Henry S. Lane—Landing in New Orleans—General Jackson—Voyage to Brazos—The turtle—Ship.

THERE was much talk in Indianapolis about volunteering. Other parts of the state were showing activity. I bustled about, interviewing members of the "Greys" and "Arabs." To my argument that the term of service was short, only one year, some of them, with an earnestness implying personal experience, replied that a year was ample time in which to die. Finally, in fear of the passing of the opportunity, I resolved to open a recruiting-office myself. The town could not more than laugh at me.

So I took a room on Washington Street and hired a drummer and fifer. Out of the one front window of the building I projected a flag, then a transparency inscribed on its four faces, "FOR MEXICO. FALL IN." I attacked the astonished public in the street. The first round was productive. A dozen or more young men fell into the procession. Within three days the company was full.

In the election of officers, James P. Drake was chosen captain and John McDougal first lieutenant. The second lieutenancy was given to me. Upon acceptance by the governor, we were ordered to the general rendezvous at New Albany, on the Ohio River.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In addition to the townfolk, the population of the entire country seemed present at our departure from Indianapolis. Lawyer John H. Bradley made an affecting farewell address. Mexico was a long way off, and the journey thither beset by dangers of sea and land. There were thousands who shook hands with us as with men never to return.

We were taken in wagons to Edinburg, up to which a railroad had slowly crawled from Madison. The railroad is only so called. In reality it was a tramway.

The solemnities of the public farewell scarcely moved me. That which excited sorrow in others did but stir my imagination. Nevertheless, a circumstance broke me down. We went afoot to the wagons. My father marched with me. He was in the prime of manhood; a soldier by education, he should have been at the head of the whole Indiana contingent. At my side, keeping step with me, he trudged along through the dust. The moment came for me to climb into the wagon. Up to that he had kept silent, which was well enough, seeing I had only to look into his face to know he was proud of me and approved my going; then he took my hand and said:

“Good-bye. Come back a man.”

Suddenly I gave him a shower of tears.

On the northern shore of the Ohio, midway between the present cities of Jeffersonville and New Albany, there is a ground famous in history. A wooded island at the foot of the falls used to be its *vis-à-vis*. There General George Rogers Clark held high revelry after his style, master of all he beheld—a brave, ambitious, profane, drunken, baronial Virginian. There the three Indiana regiments were assembled, organized, equipped, and mustered into the national service, my company being assigned to the First Indiana Infantry, letter

H. The rendezvous was appropriately named Camp Clark.

In the election of field-officers for my regiment there was but one ticket: for colonel, James P. Drake; for lieutenant-colonel, Christian C. Nave; for major, Henry S. Lane; and there was no scratching. I remember being puzzled by the absence of contest. My experience was then too limited to help me comprehend the bit of furniture called a *slate*. Here is the slate of that day: Brigadier-General, Joseph Lane, *Democrat*; Colonel, First Regiment, James P. Drake, *Democrat*; Colonel, Second Regiment, William H. Bowles, *Democrat*; Colonel, Third Regiment, James H. Lane, *Whig*. Certainly the able Democratic governor knew how to provide for himself and his party.

Sergeant Charles C. Smith, a school-mate, fine-looking and clever, was by my nomination promoted to the vacant first lieutenancy, McDougal becoming captain. As a rule, jealousies among men come with years and competition.

The three field-officers are now in their graves. Neither of them selected could have carried his company through the manual of arms.

Colonel Drake was rich in good-nature—possibly too much so. He had a presence, however, to excite respect, especially on horseback, and an uncommon aptitude for tactics. In three months he had mastered the "School of the Battalion," according to Scott, whose system was then in force, and brought his command into excellent drill and discipline. In the rush to the color-line under alarm, his face would redden and shine like a harvest moon; and then, in the wake-up by the long roll at dead of night, his voice was wonderfully cheering. Ultimately he emigrated to Georgia and ended his days there an honored and useful citizen.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The command and its responsibilities never devolved on Major Henry S. Lane. Successful at the bar and in politics,<sup>1</sup> he was singularly careless as a soldier. On parade he often appeared with his sword and sword-belt in hand. He hated a horse; so that on the march his saddle was always pre-emptible by the sick and foot-sore. For a shirk he had the eyes of a detective. In his kindness, even, he was reserved and dignified. No one knew better than he that with volunteers, at least, respect for an officer is more essential than fear. He was the soul of honor and brave to a fault; and so was he esteemed by the regiment that his indifference to formalities, though sometimes laughed at, was always forgiven.

The company officers were far above the average. Some of them were remarkable men. Captain Robert Milroy, in the Civil War a major-general, dubbed by his division "Gray Eagle," must be mentioned with particularity. A graduate of the Partridge Military School, then next to West Point in reputation, he was one of the very few whom I have met actually lovers of combat. Eager, impetuous, fierce in anger, he was a genuine colonel of cavalry. In fence with sabres his wrist was like flexible steel; besides which he had a reach to make another swordsman, though ever so skilful, chary of engaging him. This I know, having been one of a class under his instruction.

I have dealt somewhat elaborately with the few officers named in order that the *verve* of the regiment may be understood. At the end of six months it could have been depended upon for heroic action under the most adverse circumstances—and, as will be seen, the remark is not made conjecturally. Few commands

<sup>1</sup> Henry S. Lane was afterwards governor of Indiana and United States senator.

have been subjected to trials so bitter; yet it did not weaken or falter in discipline.

On July 5th rations were issued and the arms and accoutrements stowed in the hold; then, with colors flying and "Yankee Doodle" from fife and drum, we marched aboard the steamboat chartered to take us to New Orleans. There were many of the regiments with sombre countenances; probably they had a better appreciation of the hazards to which we were going; but for my part the situation was full of joyances. Now, indeed, I was a soldier. My name was on the roster and the national uniform on my back; the surroundings, all martial, kept me reminded of the life at last certainly arrived.

I have made voyages since, some of them on the seas to far countries, when every hour was charged with novelties and delights unspeakable; yet they were as views by moonlight pale in comparison with this one, so full of the zest of youth that even the Mississippi River was beautiful and its low-lying ugliness of flood and forest successions of miraculous mirage. Mexico, the land of Montezuma and Cortés, and its people, and the campaign through palmetto lands and wide *pasturas*, and battles and the taking of cities—I was to see them—all else faded into the commonplace.

At New Orleans we were landed below the city to wait for ships. There we had our introduction to soldier life, mask off. Of dry ground there was not enough for a bed. We had not a wisp of straw. Our blankets turned into blubbery slime. The officers were responsible. They should have held on to the steamers.

Along with the rest, I was wretched until an old negro peddling eggs and chickens visited us. He told me casually that we were occupying a portion of the field Andrew Jackson turned into a garden of glory in 1815.



Then I hired him as a guide. The battle-ground was more interesting to me than the city. Where was the breastwork of cotton? Where did Jackson's line begin on the right? In what direction did it stretch? That line fixed, I had the key to the fight; standing on it, I faced the British assaults, and in the patriotic indulgence of fancy cared not a whit whether I was on a slippery tussock or knee-deep in water. Four killed here; two red-coated thousands yonder! Sir Edward could have afforded a month of manœuvring for some other point of attack than this one. His haughtiness was a piece with Braddock's; so was the penalty.

Three ships were at last warped to the bank of the river; then, getting our mouldy regimental properties stowed, we thanked God for a blessed deliverance and sailed for Brazos Santiago, on the other side of the gulf.

A Baltimore clipper-built brig, new, sweet-smelling, clean, and fast, was assigned to Company H and two others, Lieutenant-Colonel Nave in command. The sea has always been kind to me. Throughout the transit I kept the deck without a qualm of the terrible *mal de mer*; and when, in the second night out, the lights of Brazos rose to view, I saw them with downright regret.

Of that outing—there may be too much familiarity in the word—there remain to me two distinct recollections. One of an enormous turtle on its back on the deck under a tarpaulin. To my landsman's eye the creature was a curiosity of itself; what stamped it on my memory, however, was the use and treatment to which it was put. Twice each day of the voyage the cook resorted to it to supply the officers' table—in the morning for steak, in the afternoon for soup—and when we landed the animal was alive.

The moonlight of the nights was of a whiteness to shut out the stars. Once I was roused from sleep and

## LEW WALLACE

brought to my feet thrilled through and through. A strange object within pistol-shot was moving swiftly in a direction the opposite of ours. It seemed indefinitely large and high. The silence of its going deepened the mystery. It acted as if self-controlled. Then I realized that it was permitted me to see a spectacle fast disappearing, and the most imposing and majestic of the apparitions of the sea—a three-mast merchantman, full-rigged, every sail set, and laden so deep that the light waves gave it no lateral motion. On it went, glacial white, mountain high, deathly still, a spectral, gliding glory of moonlit space. Whence was it? Whither bound? Whom did it serve? It passed, vanished, and made no sign. When now and then the curious ask me of the beautiful things I have seen, even the most beautiful, I astonish them by honoring that ship. My standards of the sublime are few—it is one of them.

## XII

Brazos—Death of Reck—The camp at the mouth of the Rio Grande  
—Sickness—Suffering—Burials—Major Lane appeals to General  
Taylor for relief.

THE brig laid off shore during the night. Next morning, early, I went on deck to take a look at Brazos. An inlet scarce wider than a canal let into a bay three or four miles wide. On the farther shore of the bay a snow-white tower of fair elevation arose apparently out of the water. The tower I came to know as a light-house on Point Isabel, General Taylor's base of operations against Matamoras. A chain of low dunes or shifting sand-hills ran parallel with the beach, hiding the landscape behind it; and the dunes were naked, except that here and there a vine sprawled itself out too verdureless to cast a shadow. One hut, with a chimney of barrels, half buried in a sea of driftage, and curtained roundabout by hides drying in the wind and sun, was all that spoke of human habitation. There, they told me, Padre Island terminated, while all south of the inlet constituted Brazos de Santiago. No town, no grass, not a tree. Heavens, what an awakening!

Now, I did not keep a diary, and it is too late to invent one—this in relief of all who follow me through these pages. But my memory serves me respecting two orders—the first one from Brigadier-General Lane, and it sent us to Camp Belknap, ten miles above the mouth of the Rio Grande.

There I went one day to the river. With me were

Luther Reck and John Anderson, who had been for years my closest companions. Indeed, they enlisted to be with me as much as anything else. At home we had been given to the "dare" habit; and the deeper the water, the thinner the ice, the longer the run, the hotter the blaze, the more certain the challenge, which had with us an unlikeness to the ordinary practice in that the challenger was bound to go first.

The Rio Grande nearing the gulf is always angry-looking. That day it was in flood. We stood idling awhile on the bank. The sun was at noon, and hot. Then Anderson, "What do you say to a swim?"

"No," I answered, "this is not White River."

Then he, old-time-like, "I dare you to follow me."

Our clothes were off in an instant. Anderson plunged in first. I called to them to go with the current diagonally. The pull was long and trying. At last we drew to the opposite shore, Reck behind, but striking out vigorously. All at once he screamed. We looked back in time to see him rise half out of the water, then sink. I marked the spot, and, with Anderson, made for it. The drowning generally rise twice; so we swam round and back and forth—uselessly, we never saw our friend again. He had gone down cramp-struck—down like a stone never to rise. We reported his loss in camp and to his mother, and it was many weeks before we, the survivors, recovered spirits enough to talk of the death. I doubt if Anderson ever forgot that he was the challenger.

The second order—from General Taylor, then in headquarters at Matamoras—sent the regiment into garrison at the mouth of the Rio Grande.

It is not amiss for me to say here that I accept the wisdom of the dispensations generally accredited to God as among the highest proofs of His being and good-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ness. Had we known in advance—I speak illustratively—what all of misery and humiliation there was awaiting us in that camp to which we now marched, I think it not unlikely that despair would have unloosed every bond of discipline and sunk our eight hundred good men into an ungovernable mob. In all my reading of American wars, the colonial included, I cannot recall another instance of a command so wantonly neglected and so brutally mislocated. A description may be useful. If it prove unpleasant reading, I make no apology. They to take arms hereafter should have a standard by which to measure the worst conditions possible to their service.

The camp, it is to be said, was not of our choosing. We inherited it from the First Mississippi Volunteers, Colonel Jefferson Davis commanding. As we marched in, they took to steamboats going up the river. I remember yet the sense of desolateness that shocked me viewing the place for the first time.

On the right of the camp, defending it from the sea, were sand-dunes like those at Brazos; its left was a few hundred yards in remove from the river; on the north it faced a reach of land level as a floor, treeless, apparently interminable, and subject to overflow by the tides. Across the river a ragged Mexican hamlet nicknamed “Bagdad” harbored a band of smugglers. The landing, calling it such, afforded mooring for vessels, mostly lighters. Occasionally a steamboat came down from Matamoras, staying long enough to take on supplies. From Brazos the mails were sent to Point Isabel, thence to headquarters, wherever that might be, leaving delivery to us a thing of chance. McGahan, I think it is, describes the Kirghiz out of the world, as were we—only they were nomads.

All the drinking-water to be had was from the river,

a tepid mixture about thirty per cent. sand and the rest half yellow mud. Against the purgative effect of a full draught there was nothing available except a pill of opium.

The ration, of tri-weekly issue, consisted of beans, coffee, sugar, pickled pork, and flour or biscuit; no vegetables—not even onions. The biscuits, disk-shaped and alive with brown bugs, were often subjects of sarcastic play—the men on inspection frequently substituted pieces of them for gun-flints. Occasionally parties went hunting, returning sometimes with a maverick over-ripened in the portage home; our main reliance for fresh meat was shrimps taken in the river.

A monotony descended upon the camp—a monotony unrelieved as an arctic night, as telling on the spirit as the blue mist of the plague Weyman tells of in his *Gentleman of France*. Now and then we heard of operations by General Taylor. A steamboat-man would stray in among us with the news. General Taylor had set out from Matamoras for the up-country; then had taken Camargo, the enemy having abandoned it; and thereafter, with a regiment in garrison at Matamoras, there was not the slightest need of us where we were—none earthly. A post-guard of twenty men would have been ample to hold the mouth of the Rio Grande, admitting it an indispensable depot of supplies. Occasionally, too, an inspector came down and took a snap-look at our tents from the guard of his steamer. So, directly, there was not a soul among us so simple as not to see that we were practically in limbo; then, to complete the wretchedness of the situation, a disease planted itself in our midst.

A vulgar name and antilimacteric, I grant; yet he who has seen a man sicken and die of chronic diarrhœa shall always shudder at the name, though he live a

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

hundred years. How the scourge got into our camp, whether by the river, or by the spoiled pork we ate, calling it meat, or by the bad cookery which was the rule with the messes, or by all these causes in combination, which I think the most likely, were idle conjecturing. Not less idle would it be saying this one or that was responsible for its introduction. Let me rather tell how it wrought upon us.

The soldier may have been in perfect health the day we went into the camp, which, singularly, was never named; at roll-call, three weeks having passed, I notice a change in his appearance. His cheeks have the tinge of old gunny-sacks; under the jaws the skin is ween and flabby; his eyes are filmy and sinking; he moves listlessly; the voice answering the sergeant is flat; instead of supporting the gun at order arms, the gun is supporting him. Observing the signs, I know without asking that he has been to the surgeon, and that the surgeon gave him an opium pill—I know it from knowing that in the meagre schedule of medicines at command there is no other corrective for diarrhœa. Another week and his place in the ranks is vacant. A messmate answers for him. No need of looking for him in the hospital. The post is a fixed one, yet there is no hospital of any kind. It will go hard with him, one of six in a close tent, nine feet by nine, for the night will not bring him enough of blessed coolness to soothe the fever made burning through the day. His comrades not themselves sick are his nurses. They do their best, but their best is wanting, not least in the touch which every man once mortally ailing recollects as the divine belonging of mother or wife. A delicacy of any sort would be a relief; he prays for it pitifully, and they bring him the very food which laid him on his back in the first instance — bean-soup, unleavened slapjacks, and

bacon. Another week and he is giving his remnant of strength to decency. At last he has no vigor left; mind and will are down together; the final stage is come, and—the pen refuses to go on.

As to the loss of life, I cannot give the number. There were days when a dress parade with two hundred present was encouraging—weeks when funerals were so multiplied upon us that the hours between sunup and sundown were too few—that is, for the customary honors. Then night was drawn upon. There is no forgetting, try as I will, the effect of the dead-march rendered on fife and muffled drum at night, heard first faintly and scarcely distinguishable from the distant monotone of breakers. And if, as sometimes happened, the corporal led his squad just outside my tent, the hour and the hush and darkness turned the music into a stunning tremolo of thunder.

Nor did our trials end always with the end of the sick man's life. The supply of lumber for coffins was soon exhausted; so were the gunboxes and staves of cracker barrels to which we next resorted; a little later we were driven to the use of blankets for shrouds. And even then the poor men were not always allowed their natural rest in the sands of the dunes where we laid them, for the winds, blowing fitfully, now a "norther," now from the gulf, thought nothing, it seemed, of uncovering a corpse and exposing it naked.

Skill in pathology is not required to divine the effect of such conditions upon the men. Probably there were not ten of them in the regiment who had seen the ocean or any part of it before taking ship at New Orleans. For a while to walk along the beach, to chase the crabs and be in turn chased by the breakers, to gather shells and dissect the stranded nautili was jolly fun, being all so strange. But the fun was short-lived, and when



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

it wore out there was nothing left to do except speculate upon what was to become of them.

Once in a while some other regiment would come from Brazos. The sight of them marching by, flags flying, drums beating, and hurrying aboard boats as if they smelled the contagion in our camp or feared an order for them to stop and take our place, was maddening, and presently led to a general belief that we were victims of an unfriendly discrimination at headquarters of the army or that there were traitors among us. Still—and I write it with becoming loyalty—there was never a round-robin or a refusal of duty, never so much as a military propriety disregarded.

As to responsibility for all this suffering and death, I only know it was wrong to blame Colonel Drake. All in his power to do towards saving the well from falling sick and the sick from dying he did. One day—it was when General Taylor was at Matamoras—the colonel sent for Major Lane. I heard the conversation between them.

The colonel said: "Surgeon J——s has just been here to report that the supply of medicines with which he started from New Orleans is almost gone, and that his repeated requisitions for more have received no attention. If kept here much longer, he says the sick will all die. The condition is too bad. I am ready to try an unsoldierly thing."

"What is that?" the major asked.

"To go to Matamoras and see General Taylor."

"Without leave?"

"Yes."

The major shook his head doubtfully.

"What will you say to him?"

"That there is no reason in keeping the regiment here, now that Matamoras is ours. I think he should

## LEW WALLACE

know, too, exactly what its condition is. There certainly can be no harm, then, in asking General Taylor to let us go up the river with the column of advance, or, at least, change to a more healthful camp."

The major answered, promptly: "Very well. I will go with you, if you say so."

They went next day. The major's plea, it was said, was unusually fervid. Unfortunately, the general was not used to such eloquence; either that, or to his perceptions, dulled by long service, the solicitation was as much a military offence as outright protest. Anyhow, we were left to our misery.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XIII

The march to Monterey—Attempt to go with the army—Paris C. Dunning—An instructor in tactics—The episode with Stipp.

GENERAL TAYLOR, as I now remember, set out from Matamoras against Monterey in September. Up to the last minute I persisted in believing he would take the First Indiana along with him. At length a man of the commissariat gave the *coup de grâce* to my hope. He told me in an interview that the army already under orders to move was greater than could be well supplied beyond Camargo. To Colonel Drake he showed memoranda of an estimate of rations for the expedition pared down to the narrowest limit. A little figuring on the basis of the estimate was conclusive. *We had been left out.*

It is hard for me now to understand the state of mind into which I then fell. The operations of the army filled my thought. My imagination painted them in the most exaggerated colors. The route would lead hundreds of miles into the interior of the country, by rivers, along fertile plains, over mountains, through villages and towns, ending at the City of Mexico, said to be the most beautiful capital in the world. There would, of course, be opposition and occasionally a battle. By report the people inland were superior to such as we were meeting on the frontier, and the superiority kept increasing in steady ratio. If my fancy disdained the soberness of fact, if it permitted no suggestion of danger or defeat, if it wilfully converted deserts into

gardens, and adobe towns into fair Seviles, it should be remembered apologetically that my story of *The Man-at-Arms* had been of Spain and Spaniards, and that in the manuscript of my new work I had left Cortés on the causeway about to make his first entrance into Tenochtitlan.

To this mood, of the intensity of which I was not at all conscious, I lay one of the most serious of the follies marking my beginning.

There are young fellows who should be kept apart, a continent between them; unfortunately, the reasons for keeping them apart are generally reasons for their coming together. Such were Charley ——— and I. He was a second lieutenant, like myself, though a trifle older. He, too, had an almost insane desire to see a battle; our conferences upon the subject had been latterly of daily occurrence. I went to him now with the intelligence that our regiment was to be left out, and said that to be in at the taking of Monterey we must cut loose and do for ourselves. He agreed with me. Then, to raise money for the venture, we decided to sell our pay accounts to date. The sutler, we thought, would be happy to discount them. If we could not get passage on a boat, we could buy horses and overtake the cavalry who were to march overland.

Now nothing could have been more certain than that our appearance with troops anywhere would have led to inquiry and to our instant arrest as deserters. We considered that possibility — so much is due to our common-sense—but agreed that it was one of the risks of the scheme. We argued, also, that we were going with the army, not away from it.

The sutler upon whom we waited offering to sell our pay accounts was Paris C. Dunning, whose portrait may be seen in the gallery of governors, part of the state



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

library at Indianapolis, a rare presentment of intelligence and amiability. He heard us in his private tent; and when we were through he gave way to a violent fit of laughter, as he well might; becoming serious presently, he refused peremptorily to buy our accounts; then, after lecturing us upon the enormity of the military offence we were contemplating, the results of which would be disgrace to our families and friends, he concluded: "Now, young gentlemen, if you pledge me your words of honor to drop this project, your coming to me shall never be known; if you refuse, I will at once notify Colonel Drake. I give you three minutes for decision."

We looked at each other a moment. Each saw that without money the journey was impossible, and that there was no person else in camp of whom we could safely ask it. We tried to laugh; he was serious; and directly we gave him the parole. He kept the faith with us, and I still hold him in grateful recollection.

The snubbing Colonel Drake and Major Lane had from General Taylor must have been a severe trial to those worthy officers. Nevertheless, thinking the regiment would be better of employment as a diversion from its hard conditions, the colonel had published hours of service, requiring squad and company drills in the forenoon and battalion drills in the afternoon. Then, curiously, I dropped into disfavor with the men of my company—in plainer speech, I became desperately unpopular.

Our arm, it will be recalled, was a heavy muzzle-loading musket of Revolutionary pattern, and the tactics (*Scott's Infantry*) smothered by details. Only a student with positive aptitude could master the latter. Loading, for instance, other than at will, was by twelve commands. If, on this account, there was need of patience on the part of an instructor, how much greater

the need on the part of the soldier, out in the sun, his person swathed in a closely buttoned woollen coat overlaid with three broad belts—one at the waist, the others crossing his breast and back! Imagine the man listening with attention, his blood at boiling-pitch! It turned out, in short, that my superior company officers had neither taste nor inclination to attempt the tactics, and they threw the duty of instructing the company upon me.

The progress made won me compliments. Had I been older, my intentions would have been credited to me; but men do not like being taught by boys, so it befell as said—I became generally odious, and there were threats of shooting me. The circumstance was the more regretful because I was then too inexperienced to know that the anger which caused my fall is a malady peculiar to recruits—a malady less serious because it eventually cures itself.

This, to my great relief, did not last. The incident which restored me to favor is stranger even than the circumstance that caused its loss.

The up-country ten or fifteen miles from our camp was all a saline plain broken here and there by what we called islands. These, rising abruptly from the dead level twenty or thirty feet, and a mile or two across, were covered with a rank growth of vines, shrubs, and pretentious trees, the verdure of which furnished cropping for wild cattle the year round. They were also good haunts for Mexican guerillas, who, sneaking across the river, were occasionally seen on our side.

Now, I was of those who when off duty killed time hunting—it was such a relief to get away from the horrors which locked the regiment in so terribly.

An account having reached me of an island unusually large, with vegetation more than semi-tropical and a

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

spring of cool, white water at one side, I thought it too distant for the easy-going forager, and that possibly it might be stocked with game enough to pay. So, with four men and the necessary leave, I set out one day to try it. We provided ourselves with guns and cartridges, a frying-pan, a coffee-pot, haversacks well filled, and three canteens of water to the man. Just as we passed the line of sentinels private Perry Stipp came up and asked to go with us.

Stipp, it is for the saying now, was physically and morally a bogie who ought not to have passed muster. He was humped before and behind, had arms like a gorilla, eyes limpidly blue, a fighter unwhipped, the bulldozer of the regiment. More particularly, he was ringleader in the war on me; and in threatening to kill me he had not thought it needful to speak privately. The colonel had been advised to discharge him as a lunatic who might some day take it into his head to run amuck. In fairness, however, the advice was not mine.

I looked Stipp in the eyes, thinking of his threats, and told him to provide himself as we were and overtake us. Whatever his motive in asking to go with me, it seemed a good time to have it out with him, only I should be careful.

The men, glad like myself to get away from camp, talked freely while we were going—all except Stipp, and him I kept in front, always in eye. About four o'clock the island we were seeking rose in sight. A profusion of palmettos, both cabbage-head and of the fan variety, gave it character. It was also bolder in elevation and of broader spread.

"Hello!"

This was from Stipp—his first word. We all stopped.

"What is it?" I asked.

"There—don't you see?"

Some men came out of the thicket on the edge of the bluff. There were sombreros among them, and parti-colored ponchos, and guns glistened distinctly.

"Mexicans," Stipp said next, bringing his gun to the ground. I caught his eyes, bright and steady as candles burning in a well, and knew, instinct interpreting, that he thought he had me in a corner. It was for me to say forward or back; if back, my standing was gone. I resolved to turn the table and try him.

"Are they Mexicans?" I asked.

"I should say so," Kise answered, speaking for the party.

"And there are twenty of them, at least," Edwards added.

"Well," I said, "if there are so many armed Mexicans near camp as this, the colonel should know it. Now you four stay here, ready to make for camp—Stipp, you and I will go on."

A queerish expression which I took for doubt or surprise appeared on his face; but he raised his gun and we started.

"Look!" he said, as if I were not looking.

The party on the bluff disappeared; after which they were to be imagined in ambush.

Two hundred yards from where the unknown were last seen—and not a shot. Were they making sure of us?

One hundred yards. My flesh began to crawl. Stipp's teeth were clinched.

Now we were at the foot of the bluff, and it was time for the *finale*. Then Stipp stopped.

"Not here, Stipp," I said, knowing his nerve going. "We are dead men if we stop here."

He fell in behind me.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The ascent was difficult, and on the top—nobody. With my cap I waved come on to the four still where they had been left.

They joined us and we all set out to find the Mexicans. The sun was going down when we reached the brink of the island on the opposite side to that by which we had come. Then we noticed a smoke rising. Creeping on, and looking down from the height, we saw a party from our own regiment out hunting like ourselves. We had magnified their number nearly a third. Some of them wore sombreros and blankets Mexican in style. They had found the spring, and were making coffee and roasting veal for supper. We joined them, of course.

In camp a few days afterwards there was a row and an arrest. I inquired about them. Some one had opened on me in Stipp's presence, and he thrashed the man so he had to be carried off. Stripp also gave notice to everybody who didn't like Wallace that he was for him.

That was enough. The wind veered and blew my way again.

## XIV

The march to Walnut Springs—The church robbery at Cervalvo—  
The inquiry—The doctor's confession on the return.

At last General Robert Patterson set foot in the camp at the mouth of the Rio Grande, and, after an informal review of the regiment, gave Colonel Drake an order in writing to proceed to Walnut Springs near Monterey, where General Taylor had headquarters.

To Camargo by river about two hundred and ten miles. From Camargo by land to Walnut Springs one hundred and eighty miles. The sick to be left in hospital at Matamoras. It may be believed when that programme was published there was celebration, every man according to his bent—the religiously disposed thanking God, while those of another tendency hastened to the sutlers for flowing bowls. It may be believed, also, that there was not an hour lost in getting away from the scourged post. As we had relieved the First Mississippi, the Second Mississippi relieved us—but not to stay.

When my father bade me, in the farewell at Indianapolis, to come home a man, I am sure he did not leave the injunction with me thinking I could so far forget him or myself as to become a party to the robbery of a church. That, however, was exactly what happened at the town of Cervalvo on the road from Camargo to Monterey. The story will be admirably illustrative of two phases of life—one, how a man can involuntarily aid

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and abet in the commission of a crime shocking to none more than to himself; the other, the degree to which enthusiasm in the practice of an honorable profession can pervert one's moral nature.

Cervalvo, on account of its fame for beauty, was one of the inspiring promises of the country between Camargo and Monterey; and on reaching it the promise was so generously realized that a day of rest was taken there. I still recollect how, being unused to mountains, those about that site seemed to glorify the earth. Nor did I wonder less at the inhabitants showing no alarm at sight of us. Indeed, I could not understand them until it was explained that there was a padre up in the cathedral, a really holy man, who exercised a kind of paternal government over the members of his diocese, and had such influence that they only knew of the war by standing in their doors and seeing the armies go by.

We had with us a contract surgeon from Georgia—Macon, I believe—educated, agreeable, unusually gifted in smothering his “r’s”—a veritable Knight of the Dissecting Table. His references had been excellent.

Shortly after it was given out that the regiment would remain at Cervalvo for the day, the doctor came and proposed to me that we go and see the cathedral, an overture to which I was the more willing because the padre had already called on the colonel with an interpreter, and, while paying his respects, considerately said he would be pleased if the officers would do him the honor to walk through the house. It was quite old, and he was confident the pictures would interest them.

The air that morning being of the mountain variety, I put on an overcoat, while the doctor wrapped himself in a cloak of dark cloth.

At the door we were met by a Mexican, bareheaded, clothed from head to foot in a gown tied at the waist.

He could not speak English nor we Spanish. I was afterwards told he was not a priest, but a custodian called sacristan. The first thing he would have us see was a room on the right of the door of entrance. We found it spacious, well lighted, scrupulously clean, cold, and unfurnished except with a table on which, under a glass cover globular at the top, there was a human skull. I noticed on being taken to the table that the guide twice crossed himself, from which it was a fair inference that the relic was of special sanctity. Why it was so he could not tell us, though he tried to with earnestness. The glass cover was free of dust, the skull itself white, perfect, and a remarkably attractive specimen. Its owner must have been of high endowments, mentally and morally—that is, if there be verity in phrenology.

We passed from the chamber of the skull, the sacristan leading the way. As I went out the doctor whispered to me: "Follow him. I will join you directly."

The pictures were not all equally good. A few were of masterly production. While we were examining the altar, the candlesticks of silver, the spangled effigies of the Virgin and Child, the guide doing his best in explanation, talking volubly, his soul intent, the doctor joined us. Finally we took leave, the sacristan going to the door with us.

On the way to camp the doctor seemed in high spirits. He criticised the pictures; they were daubs, he said, some of them vilely irreligious in treatment. He laughed at the custodian, and denounced priests generally as frauds and hypocrites—preachers of ideas libellous of God. Within the lines we separated, each going to his quarters.

In an hour or thereabouts the padre reappeared in camp accompanied by the sacristan and the interpreter.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Seeing them go to the colonel's tent, I went there, too. Besides the colonel, the major and the adjutant were present. The visitors were excited. The sacristan at sight of me whispered to his superior, who thenceforward kept me in observation.

This is the substance of what the padre said to the colonel evolved slowly through the interpreter. In Mexico and other Roman Catholic countries, he said, it was customary to render honors to the memory of deceased founders of churches and cathedrals. Their bodies were laid away with impressive ceremonies. In time the skulls were taken up, and kept in the edifices of their building for the veneration of communicants through generations. The exalted father to whom the world was indebted for the cathedral of Cervalvo had received such honors. Only that morning his skull had been in its usual place on exhibition under glass in the first room at the right-hand after-entrance of the holy house. But now, the padre proceeded, the relic was not to be found, though the most diligent search had been made for it. Immediately that the disappearance had been reported to him, he hurried to make it known to the colonel, not doubting that he would exercise his authority in effecting discovery of the robbers and return of the relic. The prayers at the old altar were of value, and they should be for his excellency the colonel as for a second founder.

The colonel asked the padre gravely if he wished to be understood as accusing any of his officers or men. The padre replied diplomatically that he had not knowledge to justify a direct accusation; his object was merely recovery of the skull, and he could see no offence in desiring inquiry to be made of such officers as had been to the cathedral that morning. He was confident they would all reply honorably to questions. He begged to

add that the keeper of the house had shown him two young gentlemen who had been through it within an hour and a half, of whom one had worn an overcoat, the other a cloak, and it was directly after their departure that the loss had been noticed.

"Could the keeper recognize them?" the colonel asked.

The padre looked at me, and returned, "The sacristan here who guided them through the interior tells me the officer at your excellency's side is one of them."

This was bluntly done; but repressing every show of feeling as well as I could, all eyes being upon me, I requested the interpreter to ask the padre if he meant to charge me with the offence. The padre made haste to say no. Thanking him, I then admitted having been conducted by the guide present. I admitted having worn an overcoat, and requested permission to go and get it. Returning with it on, I asked the guide if this was the coat. He said it was at least of a like kind.

"Were you not with me from my entrance to my going out?"

"Yes."

"Did you not attend me and my companion to the door?"

"Yes, sir."

"Look at me now with the coat on," I said, stepping and turning before him—"look, and explain how it was possible for me to have walked with you, stopping at the altar and the pictures, and come away with a bulky thing like the skull under my coat, which was without cape, as you now see it."

His replies were accepted as conclusive of my innocence, and the affair was in the way of a happy ending when Major Lane ventured a question of me.

"You had company to the cathedral, I think you said?"

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Yes."

"Who?"

"Dr. ———."

I have seen the expression, half a smile, that came over the major's face then, on the faces of lawyers when in cross-examination they thought they had struck a promising pointer.

"What kind of a coat did the doctor wear?"

"He wore a cloak," I returned.

The major and the colonel exchanged glances. Both of them saw a motive in the doctor which I could not have had, since it was professional; they also saw how an object like a skull, which was of size, if not weight, could have been concealed under the loose folds of a cloak. The colonel sent his orderly to request Dr. ——— to come to him immediately.

There was an explanation when the doctor came, during which his countenance was a study. He confessed having gone to the cathedral with me wearing a cloak, and that he had seen the skull under the glass cover. He even admitted thinking, while looking at it, how ornamental it would be under such a case in his office at home, and how useful to students and others interested in craniology. Then, with becoming vehemence, he denied the taking, and requested the colonel to have his tent and effects searched. That the padre might be satisfied, he invited him to be one of the examiners. In short, the impression left by the new suspect was favorable to him. I was confident of his innocence.

Nevertheless, the colonel sent for the officer of the day, and presently that gentleman, with the sacristan as witness, overhauled the doctor's quarters, discovering nothing like the relic in question; after which the visitors left, the padre profuse in thanks and apologies.

## LEW WALLACE

Some days afterwards, while descending the Rio Grande going back to Matamoras, as will be narrated, Dr. ——— was detailed for duty on the same boat with myself. From the hour his quarters had been searched, he had not alluded to the affair of the skull; but as I was passing the door of his state-room once, he called to me, and I went in.

"See here," he said to me. "Something to interest you."

Lifting the lid of a box doing duty as a trunk, he took out a parcel of bulk with wrappings of heavy brown paper and a stout hempen cord. A little work at the tie of the cord, and he produced the skull and gave it into my hands.

"Good God, Dr. ———! And you did do it?" I said, shocked clear through.

He laughed heartily, then explained:

"It's a beauty, isn't it? I had it under my cloak all the time that Mexican idiot was showing us round. I knew pursuit would follow; and quick as I got into camp I made a package of the find, dropped it into a mess-kettle, and gave a teamster half a dollar to hide it in his feed-box. Not wishing to compromise you, I didn't let you into the secret sooner. A lovely piece of furniture for my office. What good was it doing there? Think of it in my hands! Practical science is of more worth than sentiment. You'll say nothing, of course."

I kept his secret.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XV

Order to return to former camp—General Taylor's act—Lieutenant-Colonel Nave resigns—Major Lane elected to his place—The killing of Captain Thornton—Carvajal—The attack on Old Reynosa—The town spared—Gratitude of the women—The serenade.

THE last afternoon of the long march under General Patterson's order came. The world and the sky had turned to dust since we left Cervalvo, so there was but one hue to be seen, look where we might—that of dirty ochre. And now it was three o'clock in the afternoon, and only six miles to Walnut Springs, where we were to become in reality a part of an army, a consummation long devoutly wished.

Our feet were sore, but that was nothing; our hearts were light. Suddenly the column jammed into the advance-guard, and there was a halt. Then a courier rode to the colonel and delivered a despatch to him, and he read it—read it twice. The second time he kept his saddle unsteadily, his face much redder than usual. Something had hit him hard, yet he managed to give commands; and when we were faced front, aligned, and brought arms ordered, he began to read the despatch just received, but choked, and called the adjutant, a young man, who took the paper and finished it; and when he was through we all stood dazed. Some demonstration would have ensued, I am sure, but the colonel recovering made haste to put us in motion by the left flank, whereas we had been marching right in front. In plainer words, easy for people not soldiers,

Walnut Springs, to which we had been sending our thoughts bright with high hopes, was now behind us, and we were to double upon our tracks back, clear back, to the accursed camp at the mouth of the Rio Grande, eating, as it were, the three hundred and ninety miles we had come.

The order had proceeded, of course, from General Taylor. In all the files thus turned back there was not a man so dull as not to know that he and his regiment were being punished; on the other hand, had the brightest of the lot been asked what the punishment was for, he could not have replied with a suggestion, though his life depended upon it. My own opinion now, with experience to help me, is that General Taylor was governed by one of two motives: either he was reminding Colonel Drake of the unofficer-like request he and his major had made of him at Matamoras, or he intended a reprimand of General Patterson for his assumption of authority in giving the order of march.<sup>1</sup>

Whichever surmise is correct, one thing is not less true—the general who could serve innocent soldiers of his command so scurvily, allowing them under such circumstances to get within two hours of his camp, after a movement of such length and labor, must have been of a soul which no successes could have made great.

The proof of discipline is obedience, not cheerful obedience. After a while I suppose the regiment came to my way of thinking—that we had an outing anyhow.

<sup>1</sup> Years afterwards, when under command of the same General Robert Patterson, ascertaining that he remembered giving Colonel Drake the order to march to Walnut Springs, I asked if he had General Taylor's authority to give it. He answered no; that he acted from pity, having never seen men in the service in such a state of neglect and suffering. He doubted if General Taylor actually knew of the condition of the regiment, and upon that assumption he had acted.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Lieutenant-Colonel Nave, in deep resentment, resigned, whereupon the four hundred and odd survivors hastened to elect Major Lane to the vacancy.

On the way to Camargo we were overtaken by another order from General Taylor materially modifying the first one. Colonel Drake was to send two companies of the regiment to the mouth of the Rio Grande; with the rest he was to take command of Matamoras. This put us all in better spirits.

The descent of the San Juan and the Rio Grande rivers being now before us, Company H, with three other companies, embarked on the steamboat *Enterprise*, Captain Milroy in command of the detachment. Four days were thought time enough to make Matamoras, and on that supposition rations were issued. At the close of the fifth day, we were scarcely half-way to our destination, and hanging with our boat's nose over a low bank. A famine struck us, and it became necessary to forage. Five men went out in search of cattle. Two of them came back soon to tell how the party had been ambushed, and that they had barely escaped, having left three of their comrades dead.

The captain of the boat was taken into consultation. He knew the river and the region, and from him it was learned that Old Reynosa, a town of bad repute, lay off the river three or four miles, and that it was the haunt of General Jesus Maria Carvajal, whom everybody recollected as the famous guerilla who lured Captain Thornton into the fatal lariat-trap down by Fort Brown in the beginning of the war. The inference was safe, we thought, that Carvajal and his band had murdered our foragers and were then in the town.

Captain Milroy now showed himself to advantage; only instead of ordering us, he buckled on his sword, jumped ashore, and called for volunteers, declaring he

would recover the bodies of our men first, and then burn the town, and if we could catch Carvajal, the natives should be treated to a hanging in imitation of Haman's. The four companies responded to a man. Even the boatmen begged for guns that they too might go. One company was left to keep the steamer.

The dead men were found horribly mutilated. Tearing through the brush, then, we reached the town, where, as a glance disclosed, the advantages were all against us. First, a stretch of meadow-land; then a bluff fifteen or twenty feet high, its face gullied by rains; at the edge of the bluff on top a palisade of tree-trunks set side and side, and taller than our heads; behind the palisade the enemy—how many we could not see. I could see their guns glistening in the sunlight. So, by the signs, I had stumbled on my first fight, though at the moment too much excited to recognize the fact.

There was a brief halt while Milroy arranged the attack. Then, in double files, and with a yell, we rushed across the meadow. I was in command of Company H. Heavens! What furnace heat there was in that go! We reached the foot of the bluff, and not a shot had been fired at us. How I got up the face of the bluff I do not know; how over the tall palisading I would never have known had not some of the men afterwards spoken of the boosting they gave me. And then the disappointment! The Mexicans ran out of the town into the chaparral on the other side faster than we could get into it.

The barking of dogs, the only creatures that offered fight, and the screaming of women and children running in and out of the doorways, were stunning, but not enough to keep us from following the *ladrones* and pelting them with fire and yells. At the edge of the chaparral they stopped once and gave us a ragged round



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

that spent itself over our heads. That stop was of better avail to our quick-sighted ready squirrel-hunters.

Now the sight of men lying in their blood on the ground, one killed and four wounded, was new to me; and when we got to them and the wretches began praying to us in their unknown tongue for life, my feelings, I confess, underwent a sudden revulsion, and out of pity I would have interfered for them had there been any need of interference. The change, which was general on our side, may have been accelerated by the women who ran to the scene from all parts, and on their knees, and with tears and the most piteous moans and cries, joined in the supplications of the wounded. Then, when Captain Milroy ordered the men to be carried into the houses, and it was done instantly and tenderly, the women ran to their kitchens and got us dinners of baked beans, corn-cakes, and *carne seca* (dried beef). Nor was that all. When we paid them for what they gave us, I thought they would have been glad to have us stay longer.

Carvajal escaped,<sup>1</sup> and the town was not burned. Regaining our boat without molestation, we buried our dead on the bank of the river. Experience had hardened us not a little against death and burial; but thinking of it now I can see all the grewsomeness of that sepulture. Poor boys! They had their mourners at home, if not there.

We were lucky enough while returning to secure four beeves, fat for that part of the world; and the current of the river having kindly washed the sand and loam

<sup>1</sup> Further on it will appear that at one time later I had much to do with General Carvajal. I asked once why he did not fire on us while we were crossing the meadow. His answer was a good one. "I saw you had men enough to take the town, and thought it best not to fight on account of the women and children."

from under the keel of the steamboat, it was soon in motion. In the evening of the tenth day of the voyage, the four companies disembarked at Matamoras none the worse of the wear.

There was little to except to in our new quarters. We needed a rest, and had it; even drilling in the plaza in the heart of the city, treated as work, had its social counterbalances. *Bailes* were of nightly occurrence. The ultra-fashionable of New York and Boston might have smiled at the Mexican belles who were the bright lights on such occasions; nevertheless, in waltzing only a belle of Madrid could have excelled them. To natural grace and perfected sense of time, they added matchless endurance.

Those days in Matamoras, enlivened as they were by incidents illustrative of the life led there, were not without pleasantness.

To me, at least, one of the most delightful and touching occurrences was a serenade. The city lay in the hush of midnight, deeper for the military occupation it was undergoing. Much I fear even the sentinels slept on their posts. Suddenly a burst of music rose clear and high through the silence. The harmony rushing wavelike into the quarters of my company—the legislative hall of the state of Tamalipas—startled us from sleep, and we hurried to the balcony overlooking the plaza and listened. The air was “Hail Columbia,” in magnificent rendition by a brass-band. We peered through the moonlight, straining to make the musicians out, but they were under the towers of the church opposite draped impenetrably in shadow. What band was it? We had none. How came it there? I heard with tears in my eyes and an unwonted commotion in my heart. I was transported home, and stung to the quick by a reminder of how rapidly it was wearing out

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

in my recollection. The players gave but the one number, and at its conclusion disappeared mysteriously as they had come. Morning brought an explanation. A steamboat with the band of the Second United States Cavalry aboard had touched for supplies at the city, landing in the night, and, having an hour at disposal, the men had mounted their horses and stolen into the plaza. That there were such depth and touch in the old air had never before entered my thought.

There are few things that amuse me more than the freshness of youth, a quality which I now suspect must have been mine in large share; for what else was this?

Urvea, a Mexican general, appeared between Matamoras and Victoria with four thousand lancers, sent down by President Santa Anna to raid General Taylor's long line of supplies. It was reported, also, that Urvea was watching to strike us. This put Colonel Drake on his mettle. Among other precautions taken, he ditched the corner of the plaza, and had us practice with the six-pounder field-pieces, the target being two cracker barrels set one on the other. I was out with the guns one day and it came my turn to shoot. A flock of sheep happened to be moving across the flat about three hundred yards away, grazing as they went. Calling for a spherical case-shot, while it was being rammed home I made a hasty guess at the distance and the elevation required to reach the flock; then, all being ready, I suddenly swung the gun round, took a glance over it, and fired. There was mutton next day in nearly every mess-kettle, and compliments poured in on me in a shower. The third day, however, the colonel sent me his compliments. Would I please come to him? A matter of business. I complied, of course,

## LEW WALLACE

and he put a bill in my hand from the owner of the slaughtered sheep. I protested, but without avail. The shot cost me more than half a month's pay; and thenceforth I knew a regimental laugh peculiar in that it takes such a time to cool and quit.



## XVI

The First Indiana at Walnut Springs—General Taylor—The camp at Walnut Springs—A visit to Monterey—An adventure in the chaparral—A test of courage—The first panic.

AGAIN the First Indiana drew near Walnut Springs, still the site of General Taylor's headquarters. The exact date I do not remember; yet it must have been in February, the first week, I think. This time the order bore the sign-manual of Bliss, adjutant-general.

Over a thousand miles of marching—three times by the same route—and now, as in the first up-country movement, we had the same incentive to keep us in heart—a hope of battle. The whole region was rife with news of Santa Anna at San Luis Potosi assembling an army to come down and put an end to the audacious Gringos.

With the exception of Colonel Drake and Lieutenant-Colonel Lane, none of the regiment had seen General Taylor. What has been from the beginning will go on, I suppose, to the end; a hero will always be more than a man; so, although the general had, as we thought, dealt us great unkindness, and needlessly stored the dunes at the mouth of the Rio Grande with our dead, we had a craving to see him; and despite the nickname, "Rough and Ready," it was impossible for us to think of him entirely divested of pomp and circumstance. His tent must be out of the usual, a central hall, as it were, of a town of tents. Horsemen and horses must

be at his door signifying martial authority at home. In a word, the feeling was general that even before approaching his quarters there would be something to advise us, without the asking, that we were near the WILL which was law unto us—something though but a sword-belt or a mien to bid us, “Here—look here—this is HE!”

Moving forward with lengthening steps, and drawing nearer and nearer, we strained our eyes to catch every point in the surroundings of the hero. A tall white flag-staff was the first thing observable. A flag floated from it high up, but the flag was dingy and worn. That was a disappointment. Next, back of the staff, fifteen or twenty steps, perhaps, we noticed two marquees one in rear of the other, a fly before the first answering for a porch; and they, too, were dingy and discolored. Under the fly there were a few camp-stools, a small table, also dirty, and a deal bench, long and straight-backed. No orderlies in trim dress uniforms; not even a sentinel stiffly stalking a beat suggested state thereabout. These HIS quarters?

Presently, without halting, we broke into column of companies—quickly and without a break we did it, and then advanced intervals and alignment perfected. Where was HE?

Now the head of the column was passing the dingy flag on the tall pole. One by one in quick succession the companies reached the prescribed saluting distance. Officers glanced to the right. *Their swords remained at carry.* So, also, the color-bearer swept by, his nose, like his flag, mutinously in the air. And all there asked themselves, anxiously, Where is HE?

It came my turn to salute from my place behind the rear rank. I readjusted the sword-grip in my hand, and looked for the reviewing officer out of the corner

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

of my eye first, then broadly. Leaning lazily against the butt of the white pole, I saw a man of low stature, dressed in a blouse unbuttoned and so faded it could not be said to have been of any color, a limp-bosomed shirt certainly not white,<sup>1</sup> a hang-down collar without a tie of any kind, trousers once light blue now stripeless, rough marching shoes, foxy from long wear—such the dress of the man. He also wore a slouch wool hat drawn down low over a face unshaven, and dull and expressionless as the wooden Indian's habitually on duty in front of tobacco-shops. I did not salute him, but, like all who had preceded me, and all who came after me, passed on wondering, Where can HE be?

Looking backward once, I noticed Colonel Drake riding to the man with the slouch hat. There is reason to think he stopped with him and dismounted. Still I plodded on grumbling to myself, "HE is treating us shabbily, as usual."

That evening, when the good colonel's tent was pitched, I went to see him, unable to contain my indignation.

"Colonel," I said, "did General Taylor tell you that he would review us as we marched past his quarters?"

"Yes. I sent the adjutant to notify him of our coming. Didn't you see him?"

"No, sir, or I would have saluted."

The colonel's face sobered as he said, "Nobody saluted."

"Why, there was nobody to salute."

<sup>1</sup> This is to give the impression made upon me *at the time*. Since then I came to know that general officers are not entirely exempt from the effects of field life in actual campaigning. Their uniforms fade, the buttons dim, and sometimes their shirts get soiled. Though, if the latter happen when the *gentlemen* is at a fixed post where change of linen is at command, as in the instance given, one must look for the reason in the personal preference of the individual.

"Yes there was."

"Who?"

*"The man leaning against the flag-staff."*

"That General Taylor? I took him to be a teamster."

We cleared first a spacious parade-ground; then our encampment became beautiful. A stream of spring-water ran through a grove of pecan-trees hardly distinguishable from oaks majestic, as we fancy Druidical temples. A range of mountains, nearly always cloud-capped, in the southeast, Monterey nestling beneath it, lifted the horizon in that direction. Nearer by rose Saddle Mountain, a solitary pyramidal peak accessible to climbers with muscles of steel. The purer the air the bluer the sky—with Walnut Springs hard-by Monterey one has not to go to Italy to test the saying. And yet camp life went on as usual. We did little day after day but buckle the disciplinary harness tighter about us. For now it was an assured thing—everybody said it—we were to be in the coming battle, the greatest of the war.

I have been often asked if I were ever scared. It seems now that an answer may be found in an incident of occurrence to me while the regiment lay at Walnut Springs.

A paymaster arrived in Monterey, and a number of the lieutenants requested to be allowed to go to the city and interview him. Unfortunately, the time set covered my turn to be officer of the guard; but by much importunity, and the most solemn promises to be in camp at the "turning off," I was permitted to be one of the party.

The quartermaster put a wagon at our disposal, and we piled into it, accommodating ourselves to the loose board seats as best we could. There must have been



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

a dozen of us; and a merrier, wilder, more reckless mob, one readier to laugh at broken bones and peril to necks, was not in all the army. Where are they now?

It is not my purpose to describe the ride. Every man reading who can remember the happy-go-lucky of his own lusty youth can imagine it. Providentially, the harness was sound and all the material under us good American stuff. The road, too, was in our favor, having been cut through the chaparral for the passage of gun-carriages during the siege; while narrow, it was level and unencumbered. Tired and winded, the six mules at last slowed down and rolled us safely into the city.

After dinner at the hotel, we betook ourselves in a body to the paymaster's, where our several accounts were squared in United States silver dollars newly minted. And then—well, I take the liberty of making a long hiatus of “the subsequent proceedings,” except to say that near one o'clock in the night, as the one sober Indianian, I succeeded in getting the last man to bed, and left the party in care of the hostelry.

It is only just to say that I had not thought of violating my promise to the colonel to be in camp next morning, so, the teamster not to be found, I set out alone and on foot to do the six miles.

I remember a stone bridge in the city limits garnished midway with a statue of some holy personage. The image had been set up for the convenience of people piously inclined; but, as if in travesty, the district beyond the bridge was admittedly the most dangerous of the town. There, on that bridge and in front of the statue, I thought for the first time of the risks before me. Nevertheless, I went on. If the reflection left an impression on my nerves, I did not at the time notice it.

I passed the ugly precinct safely. Once some dogs in front of an adobe house assailed me, and I picked up a couple of stones, one for each hand. From the main road—to Marin, I think—I turned into the narrow passageway cut, as mentioned, by the pioneers. Occasionally it ran across openings in the chaparral. Occasionally a clump of brush projected into the passage, and there were loose stones; otherwise the way was clear, and I had not to stop and deliberate about the direction. Moreover, the stars were all out twinkling the brighter because of the absolute lethargy in the air. The hush was soothing, the coolness delicious.

Three miles had been put behind me certainly, and I was bowling swiftly and lightly along, when all at once it struck me that I had nothing with which to defend myself—not even a penknife. I stopped, my ears wide open. There was only the universal silence, and I moved on again, but not with a free step. I was aware, too, of cold shivers, now on my cheeks, now along my scalp; and I fancied noises, the breaking of twigs in the brush, whirrings overhead, beetles a-wing, birds restless and shifting on their roosts. The truth is, my nerve was going, and my will.

A clump had been left at a certain point in the wall of brush hemming the road large enough to have furnished hiding for a horse behind it. I noticed the clump when about twenty feet from it looking unusually black, and came to a dead stop. Then something like a lapse of sensation took me. My feet would not stir; they seemed to have taken root in the ground. I could neither think nor resolve. From the ends of my fingers and toes the blood in icy drops ran to my heart, so that it stood still, refusing to beat. In a word, I stood overwhelmed by all the phenomena to terror.

The very strange part of the affair was that I fell

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

into this state, so almost identical with nightmare, before anything in the least likely to cause it had really happened. Premonition suggests itself here; anyhow, the clutch upon me was hard—harder possibly of a recollection, at the moment too faint to be spoken of as an idea, that near where I was standing the servant of an officer had been waylaid only the week before, and murdered. And if, in this faint of will and nerve—such was the condition—anything in the least unusual were to happen, a general collapse was sure to overtake me.

And exactly that happened. I heard a sharp metallic *click, click*, as of the hammer of a gunlock raised first to half, then to full cock, slowly, and with care lest the game should startle and run. Then a hiss flew out—the familiar hiss of powder burning in a pan—and all the chaparral behind the clump flashed red; and quick as the flash my senses left me.

Upon “coming to,” I found myself hugging the ground like a snake. How long the lapse had lasted I cannot begin to tell, whether five minutes or an hour; neither have I an idea how I came to do what I did; none the less it was the best thing. Springing to the side of the road—the left, as I soon made out—I dropped down, and dragged myself into the chaparral, striking, by happy chance, one of the many paths tunnelled through the fastness by wandering goats and hogs.

It is doubtful if any man could have got closer to the ground than I had without digging into it. I lay still awhile listening. My heart beat, I fancied, like a bass drum, and a cold sweat covered me. Then, suddenly, I thought, “Good Heavens! what if some of the fellows in camp who knew I was to return are in the waylaying?” A thrill of shame splattered me as with hot water, and completed my recovery. I crawled on far-

## LEW WALLACE

ther through the tunnel. The movement was slow and sore, for every leaf I came in contact with had its thorns keen as needles. At last I gained an opening, and stood up never more myself. There was a light in the sky signifying morning, and, taking direction from it, I walked around the place of ambush. Fortune favored me. Standing in the road, I listened again. There was nothing. Strangely enough, however, in that instant the panic caught me in full force again, and I started and ran. I ran with all my might, and so blind and headlong that if a regiment of Urvea's lancers had risen in front of me and blocked the narrow passage, I believe I should have dashed into them. The tents of the camp at length appeared, and I knew myself safe.

For a time I went about chary lest some one should blister me with the story, but no, the incident was never mentioned.

The sight of a child in fear always stops me now with quick appeal—or, with greater emphasis perhaps, since that night I have seen masses of soldiers in flight, and let them go by, partly out of sympathy, partly because no one knows better than I how blind and unreasoning panic is.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XVII

The battle of Buena Vista—February, 1847—Permission to go to the front—Saltillo—La Rinconada—Biscuits and onions—The Kentucky lieutenant—The adobe house—The three days' siege.

ABOUT the middle of the month (February) General Taylor astonished the command at Walnut Springs by disappearing, leaving nothing of headquarters except the white flag-staff. Presently we heard he had been seen going in the direction of Saltillo, with an escort of cavalry, and fast, as if the business were urgent. Had Santa Anna emerged from the desert?

A few days later, Captain S——n, of the Third Indiana, rode into camp en route to join his company wherever it might be. He was straining every nerve to reach it before the fight, and wanted somebody to go with him. Colonel Drake consented to my going. Here was another chance for me. Borrowing a mustang and riding-gear, I was on the road with the captain within thirty minutes. A double-barrelled shotgun of caliber to carry a service cartridge lay across my lap. The captain was custodian of a lunch contributed by Colonel Drake.

After leaving San Katrina we neither met nor were overtaken by a human being; this though the road was a broad highway connecting two capital cities. To such distance hostile armies approaching each other can interrupt the every-day courses of life!

Saltillo and Monterey lie separate sixty miles, with La Rinconada, a hacienda, half-way. Tired, hungry,

## LEW WALLACE

sore, we were glad when near nightfall a picket from the hacienda halted us. At the house in use as barracks we made ourselves known to a lieutenant, who proved himself a brave and hospitable gentleman. He was a Kentuckian. His reply to our request for entertainment was merely this:

"Certainly, gentlemen. You shall be made, man and beast, comfortable as possible. Sorry I can't do better by you. To-day we were to have received an instalment of rations. We draw from Saltillo. For some reason our teamster is not on time. Lancers probably on the road. Anyhow, we are reduced to hard-tack, with onions from a garden back of the house for dessert. Still, I can promise you salt of good quality, American made, with choice water from a ditch near by. If your stomachs work well, all right. Come in, and make yourselves at home."

A man set the table. The biscuits were of the cracker variety and the onions artistically sliced. The tin cups were not immaculately bright. There was no coffee. While we ate, the lieutenant generously opened his budget of news. La Rinconada, he said, had been occupied—I speak from memory—by Brigadier-General Marshall, his command consisting of a battalion of Kentucky horse, with two or three twenty-four-pounder guns and as many eight-inch howitzers. Only that morning the general had set out for Saltillo under fast-marching orders received during the night, leaving a half company in garrison. Extending his news beyond La Rinconada, our host further apprised us that Taylor and Wool, were doing business together. The army was out at Encantados waiting for Santa Anna advancing by forced marches. When last heard from the Mexican was at a village called Encornacion. There had been some skirmishing, and the armies would come

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

together soon—exactly when or where no one could say. “The Old Man” (Taylor) had a mouth for secrets.

In the midst of the discourse—not more, in fact, than thirty minutes after our dismount—a soldier appeared and said, with suppressed excitement, “The pickets are firing, sir.”

“From what direction?”

“From the direction of Saltillo.”

The lieutenant buckled on his sword with gravity.

“Excuse me, gentlemen, if I leave you awhile,” he said. “I think there is business in this interruption. I have been expecting it, and see now why my teamster isn’t on time. If you want any more dessert, call for it.”

He was gone fifteen or twenty minutes. Meantime the sound of a dropping fire penetrated to where we sat. We quit munching crackers. Pretty soon we distinguished the tramp of men in files. The door flew open under the impulse of an energetic kick outside, and the garrison, or a part of it, marched in arms at trail. The light was dim—from a candle or two stuck in red onions—but there was enough to help to a glance at the soldiers who passed through the room steadily; after which the door admitting them was banged to and securely barred.

The lieutenant stopped to explain.

“It’s business, gentlemen. The house is being surrounded.”

“What kind of a house is it?” S——n asked.

“It’s adobe, sir, and pretty solid. There is a fence of the same material enclosing it on all sides, except here in front. If the Greasers have no artillery, we can stand them off.”

He looked over us, for we were then on our feet, and went on. “I suppose you prefer to take a hand with

## LEW WALLACE

us; so, if you are through supper"—he smiled grimly—"and will come with me, I'll see you have front seats."

S——n was accommodated with a musket and cartridges. I caught up my shot-gun; whereupon we followed the lieutenant.

"There's the back door," he said. "It's open to let the rest of the men in, if there's a rush. I'm taking you to the roof. Here's the ladder."

On the roof the night air seemed chilly—or the situation may have had an effect on me—and I could not help thinking it strange that my chronic longing to get into a fight should be gratified at such an out-of-the-way place. Sure enough the house was surrounded. Then S——n and I lay down behind the adobe wall rising above the roof like a parapet, and helped the garrison within and the leaguerers without to fill the night with intermittent musketry. Nobody of ours was hurt. At dawn the enemy retired out of range, and in that way as good as said we were not in their mind's eye—that they were holding the road merely to prevent communication until the crises up-country had passed.

We remained thus in leaguer until morning of the 25th, ample time to test thoroughly the theory of the vegetarians, and satisfy ourselves that crackers and onions, reinforced though they were with salt, American made, and choice water from a ditch, were susceptible of improvement as a ration. That day the Mexicans suddenly disappeared in the direction of Monterey, and S——n and I took to the road and its chances. In the afternoon we met the overdue teamster hurrying, under escort of four cavalrymen, to the relief of the lieutenant at La Rinconada.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XVIII

Saltillo—February 25th—General Wool—Major Cravens—The field of Buena Vista after the battle—The Indiana regiments—The disposition of troops—Description of the battle—Mexican forces and generals (names)—The first day's fight—Colonel Gell—Colonels Hadden and Davis—Marshall—The fight in the ravine—Violation of flag of truce—Bragg—"A little more grape, Bragg"—The day is saved.

WE, the captain and I, reached Saltillo in the evening of the 25th without further interruption. Thence we rode to Buena Vista, five miles out.

Tired as I was, I spent most of the night listening to accounts of the battle. When, finally, my blanket unrolled to receive my aching bones, I was stuffed with talk and gossip, and the mass lay in my mind indigestible, like a late supper on a provincial stomach.

First thing next day were calls on the Lanes, General "Joe" and Colonel "Jim." To the former I reported, explaining my presence.

Then followed my respects to General Wool, whom my father admired extravagantly. With volunteers General Wool's reputation was that of a martinet, prim, formal, and stern to an offensive degree. They said he would not allow himself the compliment of a serenade; that he was always in uniform, with a leather stock about his neck and epaulets on his shoulders; that he received visitors capped, booted, and spurred; that he began business at daybreak, and ate with his sword on; some believed he even slept with his sword. In short, there was no limit to the general's unpopularity. I

found him an agreeable gentleman, kind and sympathetic, and left him a subscriber to my father's opinion.

From General Wool, in company with friends who had been in the battle, notably Major Cravens, of the Second Indiana, I passed to the field. There the wrecks still lay in awful significance—dead men and horses, bayonets, accoutrements, broken muskets, hats, caps, cartridge-paper, fragments of clothing. The earth and rocks were in places black with blood, here a splotch, there a little rill. Details were still digging pits for the sepulture of Americans; other parties were hauling the unfortunates in and depositing them in ghastly rows by the pits. The civil authorities of Saltillo had been ordered to bury the Mexican dead; they were having the bodies dragged to the nearest ravines, pitched pitilessly down into the depths, and half covered with stones. Groups of swarthy peons, women and men, went about clipping the manes and tails of the dead horses.<sup>1</sup>

Though too late to make the battle of Buena Vista a part of my life, there is a reason, and I think it a good one, why I should deal with it somewhat in detail.

In his official report, General Taylor condemned a portion of the troops from Indiana, and in a manner so sweeping that the reputation of the state suffered from it through a long series of years—down, in fact, to the War of the Rebellion. And believing myself in possession of evidence to show the judgment unjust, and in material points officially false, it would seem a duty required of me to correct the wrong. That I will do in the next chapter. First the main features of the field should be considered.

It was crossed by a road its whole length from north

<sup>1</sup> To make lariats and saddle-girths.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

to south. Blocking that road brought Santa Anna to a stand-still and compelled him to give battle.

In selecting the field, General Wool had been governed by its defensive advantages, exactly as General Taylor was governed when he approved the selection.

Going south from Saltillo, say to San Luis, one comes, after passing the height above the city, to a sheep-ranch called San Juan de la Buena Vista, from which the name of the battle was taken. Aside from a few clay-roofed habitations more nearly *jocales* than houses, the hacienda is unmarked save by a corral probably one hundred and fifty feet square. Indeed, everything about the place is in keeping with the plateau extending thence far to the south, a valley of desolation bounded by mountains on the east and west. Cacti and Spanish-bayonets are the only green things to vary the dun-gray color of the spacious stretch.

Beyond the hacienda there is a spread of the plateau, crossing which the traveller comes next to the Pass of Angostura.

The road there descends into a squeeze between ridged heights on the left and gullies on the right, the latter shapeless and of such width and depths as to be passable by nothing living but birds. A spur of the mountain dropping down to the gullies secured the position against attempts at turning. A simple earthwork for the accommodation of a battery across the road up where the descent into the squeeze begins would hold the pass against direct attacks along the road. General Wool, quick to see these advantages and accept them as kindnesses of nature, caused a breastwork to be thrown up at the point mentioned, and intrusted it to Captain J. M. Washington, of the Fourth United States Artillery. Two companies of the First Illinois Infantry behind the breastwork, and six other companies constituting the

## LEW WALLACE

body of the regiment under Colonel Hardin on the hill above it, supported Washington and his five guns. And still not content, knowing the pass to be the key to the whole field of battle, he posted Colonel Lane's Third Indiana in reserve on a summit a little to Washington's rear.

Thus La Angostura and the road through it, together with a safe position on which to rest the right of the little army, were happily secured, leaving Santa Anna but one other point of attack.

Ravines, eight or ten in number, break the plateau east of the pass into ridges. Trending a little south of east, they all bear down towards the pass and become gorges sixty or seventy feet in depth, immense natural ditches absolutely deterrent except by going around them up by the foot-hills where there was a passage-way, rough yet practicable for infantry and horsemen, which once gained necessarily operated the turning of the pass. Knowing that to succeed Santa Anna must secure that way, no other being left him, General Wool applied himself to fencing it in.

A table of the commands other than those we have seen posted in support of Washington available for the upper defence may now be submitted. And we are startled here, they are so few:

### REGULARS

Third Artillery, Sherman and Bragg.  
First Dragoons, Captain Steene.  
Second Dragoons, Lieutenant-Colonel May.

### VOLUNTEERS

#### CAVALRY

Arkansas, Colonel Gell.  
Kentucky, Colonel Marshall.  
Texas Volunteers, Major McCullough.



# AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

## INFANTRY

First Illinois, Colonel Hardin.  
Second Illinois, Colonel Bissell.  
Second Kentucky, Colonel McKee.  
First Mississippi, Colonel Davis.  
Second Indiana, Colonel Bowles.

Meagre to the eye, meagre in fact. But worse, the commands were all fractional. Thus, the First Illinois was less four companies garrisoning Saltillo. Two companies of the First Mississippi were guarding headquarters and the train in park near the hacienda. So, as will be presently seen, the Second and Third Indiana each lost two companies by detachment. All this aside from the reductions wrought by disease, on which account few, if any, of the regiments could boast four hundred effectives all told.

To post this inadequate force to the best advantage over a ground so spacious and peculiar was indeed a most difficult problem.

Let us see how it was done.

Three ravines in the south all lead from the road through the pass up to the now all-important passageway along the base of the mountains. These were, in fact, what in military phrase may be termed covered ways, every one of them possible of use for the ascent of infantry to the plateau, all of which had to be defended.

The extreme southern situation had a salience certain to attract Santa Anna, and General Wool thought best to establish his left at the head of that ravine; so he began the posting by placing Colonel Bowles's Second Indiana there, in support of Lieutenant O'Brien with three guns. General Lane had charge of the regiment and battery, and all the dispositions else had relation to that most advanced position.

At the left of the Second Indiana, but some distance to its rear, and directly across the passageway, Colonel Humphrey Marshall's Kentucky cavalry and a squadron of the Second United States Dragoons were placed.

Then in *echelon*—the word is somewhat strained—at the right rear of the Second Indiana, but nearly a quarter of a mile removed, Bissell's Second Illinois and a section of Bragg's battery were established fronting south to lend Bowles a helping hand, if need should be, and at the same time look after the heads of the second and third ravines.

Left of Bissell, at a wide interval, there were two guns and a squadron of dragoons.

Next, at another interval, Colonel McKee's Second Kentucky infantry was posted.

Then behind a ravine in rear of all these—the mother ravine, so to speak, having its head far up in the mountains, and christened La Bosca de la Bestarros—Colonel Gell's Arkansas cavalry was in reserve.

Finally, to keep the position of the Second Indiana from being turned by infantry scaling the mountain at its left, a provisional battalion was formed of two companies from the Second and Third Indiana respectively, and extended along a convenient ridge overlooking the plateau.<sup>1</sup>

Then dispositions made—they are given as of mid-afternoon, February 22d—General Wool rested. He had done the best with his scant force; and, following his example, it is for us now to look at the enemy.

<sup>1</sup> Davis's First Mississippi is omitted from mention, it having been called off, together with a squadron of dragoons under Lieutenant-Colonel May, as escort for General Taylor returning to Saltillo.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Heavy clouds of dust seen in the morning of the 22d in the direction of Angostura notified General Taylor of the approach of the Mexicans.

At eleven o'clock a summons to surrender at discretion was politely rejected.

The summons had ample backing. Twenty-eight battalions of infantry; thirty-nine squadrons of cavalry; artillery: three twenty-four pounders, three sixteen-pounders, five twelve-pounders, five eight-pounders, one seven-inch howitzer, with four hundred and thirteen artillerists to serve them. That is to say, eighteen thousand one hundred and thirty-three men were closing in behind the last ridge out on the waterless land in front of Buena Vista.<sup>1</sup>

These were commanded by the ablest generals of the Mexican Republic, eager, each of them, to share with his chief magistrate the harvest of glory which they doubted not was ready for his reaping: José Miñón, Michel Torena, Pedro Ampudia, Manuel Andrade, Ignacio de Mora y Villamil, Manuel Lombardini, Francisco Pacheco, Julien Juvera, José Maria Ortega, Angel Guzman, Antonio Corona, Francisco Perez.<sup>2</sup>

Santa Anna began the battle directly after the rejection of the demand for surrender by feigning an attack along the road through the Pass of Angostura. Then, amid a flourish of batteries in position here and there, Ampudia's light brigade commenced swarming up a ridge facing the American riflemen at General Lane's left. All eyes on the plateau below turned to follow the crackling which ensued. Ere long night hid the combatants. Said Major Cravens, standing with me

<sup>1</sup> This statement of numbers from Santa Anna's official report. Commands not mentioned by him, however, brought his army to over twenty thousand men actually engaged.

<sup>2</sup> The reader is requested to give each of these names the honorable prefix *General Don*.

where his regiment lay trying to sleep: "I sat on my blanket for hours watching the affair on the ridge yonder. I couldn't hear the rifles, but the sparkles reminded me of June in Indiana and of fire-flies gleaming across a meadow."

That Santa Anna designed turning the American left by gaining the passageway at the base of the mountains was now obvious.

To that end, under cover of night, he shifted Ballarta to the right where, by a laborious pull up an eminence, the shrewd artilleryman planted his five eight-pounders in range to enfilade Bowles and O'Brien. Juvera, chief of cavalry, together with Torrejon and Andrade, was next posted in support of Ballarta. Then, to gain the advantage of a surprise, the infantry divisions of Lombardini and Pacheco, seven thousand strong, were drawn noiselessly into a broad ravine where they bivouacked.

On the morning of the 23d a furious outbreak of Mexican artillery announced dawn over the mountains and seemed a chosen signal of action. Ampudia at the sound rushed the riflemen in his front; but reinforced they held their own. Juvera gained ground, while Villamil and Blanco down in the pass lost heavily repeating the feint of the day before.

The desolate valley was yet ringing with the unwonted thunder, when suddenly Lombardini's division burst out of the broad ravine; gaining space on the plateau, it faced by the left flank, and in column of brigades confronted O'Brien and the Second Indiana.<sup>1</sup>

While the issue of fire waxed hot, another stream of pomponed-shakos poured out of the same ravine, and

<sup>1</sup> The execution of this manœuvre was so beautiful that it was a subject of general commendation while I was in General Taylor's camp.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Pacheco, repeating Lombardini's simple manœuvre, took post on his colleague's right and joined in the battle.

With all their weight, the Mexicans wavered. Then to get closer, and partly to avoid the enfilading of Ballarta, General Lane ordered an advance. O'Brien obeyed; but in the midst of the movement Colonel Bowles ordered, "Cease firing, and retreat." Twice he gave the order; whereupon his regiment began breaking at its right, company after company, until, presently, the greater part dissolved into a mob flying aimlessly to the rear. O'Brien, left without support, withdrew two of his guns, the horses and men of the Third having been killed or disabled.

Results followed rapidly.

Juvera advanced trotting.

The American riflemen in the mountain, about to be cut off, made haste down, and ran, most of them, to the hacienda, stopping in the corral. Of those who tried to rejoin their standards, many were slain.

The Kentuckians at the left of the Second Indiana—Marshall having reached them safely—faced to the rear, and plying their spurs joined Colonel Gell on the thitherside of La Bosca.

Most serious, however, between Lombardini and Washington in the pass there now stood but three regiments all seriously reduced—Bissell's Second Illinois, McKee's Second Kentucky, and Hardin's First Illinois. The gallant Mexican half-wheeled his battle front to the left, and it seemed that the three regiments, beaten in detail, must go the way of the Second Indiana; but General Wool kept a clear head. At his orders, Bissell fell back, while Hardin and McKee advanced running to him; and meeting, the three formed a line into which Bragg and Sherman thrust their batteries. Then Lombardini and Pacheco were upon them with a roar of

“vivas”; the ravines as they approached reducing the opposing fronts to an equality, it became a question with the combatants which could longest endure the killing.

Juvera allowed Marshall and Gell no pause. Crossing La Bosca, he fell upon them, and pushed them back—back almost to the corral of the hacienda. Gell, refusing to yield an inch, died sword in hand.

Then in the nick of time—eight o’clock—General Taylor appeared returning from Saltillo with the First Mississippi and May’s dragoons. By every rule of scientific war he was beaten;<sup>1</sup> rising in his stirrups and looking back he could see Miñon’s pennons fluttering between the hacienda and the city; his left was turned; his cavalry was beating back overwhelmed; one thin line—thinner for the smoke enveloping it—was hardly staying Lombardini’s masses seeking clutch of the Pass of Angostura. If then he had a sinking of the heart, no one of those about him saw it in his stolid countenance. Lane, of the Third Indiana, had been in reserve chafing; him he ordered to join Davis; the two to cross La Bosca and crush Pacheco’s flank. One gun—Kilburn’s—would go with them.

Lane started on the run. Davis halted once to repel an attack of lancers. Then about two hundred of the Second Indiana under their own colors, and led by their Lieutenant-Colonel (Hadden), met Davis, and, without halting, formed on his left. It was a long run, but finally the three regiments together reached La Bosca, and crossing it, and deploying with cheers, poured a plunging fire into Pacheco’s column at a time when his at-

<sup>1</sup> The story that General Wool rode to General Taylor upon the latter’s appearance on the field, and said to him, “We are beaten,” is apocryphal. At that moment the two were separate from each other by a ravine too deep for passage by horsemen.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

tention was wholly absorbed by Hardin, McKee, and Bissell. In a time incredibly short the portion of the plateau down which Lombardini and Pacheco had descended so triumphantly was clear of the living. Lombardini himself rode off wounded.

General Taylor had leisure now to give attention to the fight which had been going on strenuously between Marshall and Juvera, begun, as has been seen, directly that Colonel Bowles ordered his regiment to retreat.

Following and crowding Marshall, Juvera was drawn down close to the hacienda. Suddenly the coping-stones on three sides of the corral seemed to burst into flame. The cheer that followed was as stunning as the volley. Strangely, then, the Mexicans divided; one part of them sped past the corral, and, crossing the valley, disappeared in a defile of the mountain in the west; the others turned, and in great disorder rode just as madly back over the bloody track by which they had come, intending to rejoin the main body of their army. Bragg was sent to intercept them, with Davis, Lane, and Hadden in support. The broken, panic-stricken horsemen tried to find refuge in the foot-hills, where they would have been forced to surrender had not Santa Anna despatched a messenger to General Taylor asking what he wanted. It is not often the sanctity of a flag of truce is so infamously abused. While it was coming and going the enemy escaped.

At two o'clock the plateau was in possession of the Americans, all save a corner in the southeast where the enemy was in apparent confusion but busy about something. Occasionally the sullen report of a heavy gun and the scream of a shell in flight over the ridges broke an hour of inaction. The weary soldiers availed themselves of the calm to rest, lying in semi-order about their colors.

But Santa Anna was not beaten. The hour so welcome to his enemies, because of its quiet, was on his part an hour of intrepid action.

Assembling the remains of the divisions of Lombardini and Pacheco, he united them with Ampudia's light brigade and Ortega's third division which was intact, having been in reserve. He also moved to the right a column of Villamil's that had been making feints against Washington, and mobilized a battery of twenty-four-pounders. Ballarta he brought down to the plain. Corona had already posted the four twelve-pounders in what he judged the best place.

By this thrifty management the president-general was able to make his final attack with twelve thousand men, General Don Francisco Perez in command. The strategy was Napoleonic.

Colonels Hardin and McKee, it appears, had undertaken a reconnoissance to expose the enemy in his corner of the plateau. Supporting O'Brien and his two pieces, they reached the ground which the Second Indiana had held in the morning; just then, Santa Anna's preparation completed, Perez advanced. In the words of General Taylor, both regiments were "entirely routed"; and this time O'Brien lost all his guns. Hardin and McKee and his lieutenant-colonel, young Henry Clay, refusing to retreat or to order retreat, died with their faces to the foe.<sup>1</sup>

The two regiments, carrying their heroic dead tenderly, retreated down a ravine opening into the pass under Washington's breastwork. There were pursuers who shot at them from the sides of the ravine; though a greater multitude entered the ravine after them, and in

<sup>1</sup> One cannot avoid contrasting the conduct of Hardin and McKee and Clay with the behavior of Colonel Bowles; yet it was to the latter the commanding general applied the term *gallant*.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

their eagerness kept on until in the area spreading and rockbound at the exit. There, looking up, they beheld the mouths of Washington's five guns staring upon them with unwinking blackness. They turned to get back, but the crowd behind pushed them forward. Washington withheld his fire; when the last fugitive was safe, he opened upon the shrieking mass packed in the area, his guns all double-shotted with grape and canister.<sup>1</sup>

Perez, depending upon weight of attack and impetus, delivered it in column.

Still General Taylor was undismayed. He ordered Bragg and his supports — Davis and Lane — to fall upon the enemy's left flank, for which they had to recross La Bosca; and they did it on the run, Hadden with them. Then they were attacked; whereupon, Davis directing, they formed a "V," the angle resting on the edge of the ravine, and by the cross-fire they were thus enabled to give ground swept the assailants from their front; then they hurried after Bragg.

Bragg, meantime, pushed on with all the speed the ground permitted, and without waiting for support. When he wheeled his guns into battery, the enemy was within a few yards of their muzzles, and at first he gave

<sup>1</sup> That area, I do not hesitate saying, all my subsequent experience in mind, was the most horrible after-battle scene I ever saw. The dead lay in the pent space body on body, a blending and interlacement of parts of men as defiant of the imagination as of the pen.

In 1867 I spent a day on the field of Buena Vista renewing my recollections of 1847. I remember seeing a man coming slowly towards me. In the distance his actions were so strange that I waited for him. Hoe in hand, he was leading a rill of water somewhere, and it ran gently after him. Finally, and to my surprise, he led it down to the area described in the text, then a patch of wheat in luxurious growth. Could it have been, I asked myself, that the crop he was fostering derived its emerald richness from the blood spilled there the terrible day so long gone?

## LEW WALLACE

ground as the pieces recoiled. Then it was that General Taylor sent the famous order, "A little more grape, Captain Bragg." And speaking of results, General Taylor adds in his report, "The first discharge of canister caused the enemy to hesitate; the second and third drove him back in disorder, *and the day was saved.*"<sup>1</sup>

Six o'clock and the repulse was complete. Night fell cold, and in the morning Santa Anna and all his host, save the wounded and those never to rise again, were back at Agua Nueva.

<sup>1</sup> The italics are mine; the expression is General Taylor's.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XIX

General Taylor's report of the battle of Buena Vista—Report of court of inquiry exonerating Indiana regiments charged with cowardice—Colonel Bowles—A physician and botanist—Brigadier-General Lane—The battle.

IN General Taylor's official report of the battle of Buena Vista there is this sentence:

"The Second Indiana, which had fallen back as stated, could not be rallied, and took no further part in the action, except a handful of men who, under its gallant Colonel Bowles, joined the Mississippi regiment and did good service."

I say now that in all American history there is not another sentence which, taken as a judgment of men in mass, equals that one for cruelty and injustice—none so wanton in misstatement, none of malice so obstinately adhered to by its author, none so comprehensive in its damage, since it dishonored a whole state, and, though half a century has passed, still holds the state subject to stigma.

Let me now make my words good. It is necessary in the very beginning to get the charges covered by the extract quoted distinctly in mind.

General Taylor says the regiment fell back. That is true; but as the statement is wholly unqualified, the inference is left that the falling back was from cowardice, and to that I except.

General Taylor says, next, that the regiment could not be rallied. That I say is untrue.

## LEW WALLACE

General Taylor says, in the third place, that the regiment after it fell back took no further part in the action. To this he makes an exception in favor of a "handful of men who, under its gallant Colonel Bowles, joined the Mississippi regiment and did good service." That, I say, is one of those cunning partial truths which, by forcing a contrast between the meritorious conduct of a few and the supposed infamous conduct of the many, but intensifies a wrong.

The question now presents itself, How am I to make my exceptions good against General Taylor? By putting my dictum against his? The American people are discriminative, and to none are they so generous as to the dead; wherefore no one appreciates more keenly the need upon me, which is that the testimony offered must be of sanctity superior to his word. And that it shall be.

Colonel Jefferson Davis, learning, after the battle, that Colonel Bowles, of the Second Indiana, had fallen into the ranks of his Mississippi regiment as a private, and behaved well, conceived the idea of specially recognizing the conduct. So he ceremoniously presented to Colonel Bowles the Mississippi rifle used by him. The publicity of the affair affronted the survivors of the Second Indiana, who held that acceptance of the present was an admission to their dishonor. Then General Lane, thinking to get the facts of the retreat of record, sought a court of inquiry, the regiment having been part of his command in the battle.

I now submit extracts from the records of that court, premising that they are in Washington.

"(Orders No. 279.)

"HEADQUARTERS CAMP AT BUENA VISTA, *April 26, 1847.*

"1. By a court of inquiry which convened at this camp in pursuance of Order No. 233, current series, and of which



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Brigadier-General Marshall is president, . . . the following have been announced as the facts of the case. . . .

"Facts— . . . That through the exertions of General Lane and other officers, from one hundred and fifty to two hundred men of the Second Regiment of Indiana Volunteers were rallied, and attached to the Mississippi regiment and the Third Indiana, and remained with them on the field of battle during the remainder of the day.

"By command of Brigadier-General Wool.

"IRVIN McDOWELL, A. A.-General."

General Taylor said the regiment could not be rallied, and after the retreat it took no further part in the action. Attention is directed to the squareness of denial with which the court meets the two assertions.

General Lane then determined to put the blame for the retreat where it belonged; and with that in view he preferred charges against Colonel Bowles. These General Taylor ignored by declining to order a court. In a short time, however, public opinion—the term is as justly applicable to a camp as to a city—drove Colonel Bowles in turn to ask a court of inquiry upon his conduct; and General Wool, who had succeeded to the command at Buena Vista, ordered a court with Colonel Bissell, of the Second Illinois Volunteers, for president, and from its report I submit extracts, not doubting that their pertinency will be instantly admitted.

"(Orders No. 281.)

"HEADQUARTERS CAMP AT BUENA VISTA, *April 27, 1847.*

"1. A court of inquiry, of which Colonel Bissell, Second Illinois Volunteers, is president, convened at this camp on the 12th instant, pursuant to Orders No. 267, current series, being instituted at the request of Colonel W. A. Bowles. . . .

"The court, after diligently and faithfully inquiring into the matter before it, report, from the evidence given, the following as the facts of the case, and its opinion thereon:

"Statement of facts:—In reference to the first charge, it appears from the evidence that Colonel Bowles is ignorant of the company, battalion, and brigade drills. . . .

"In relation to the second charge, it appears from the evidence . . . that Colonel Bowles gave the order, 'Cease firing, and retreat'; that General Lane was present, and that he had no authority from General Lane to give such an order.

"The court finds that the fact of Colonel Bowles having given the order above mentioned did induce the regiment to retreat in disorder, and that Colonel Bowles gave the order with the intention of making the regiment leave its position.

"The court is of the opinion that at the time Colonel Bowles gave the order, 'retreat,' he was under the impression that the artillery had retreated, when, in fact, the battery at that time had gone to an advanced position under the order of General Lane, which order had not been communicated to Colonel Bowles.

"And in conclusion, the court finds that throughout the engagement, and throughout the whole day, Colonel Bowles evinced no want of personal courage or bravery, but that he did manifest a want of capacity and judgment as a commander.

"By command of Brigadier-General Wool.

"IRVIN McDOWELL, A. A.-General."

The reader now has the evidence upon which I rely—viz., the findings and opinions of two military courts; not one, but two courts. To reach the full effect of the clash in simple truth, I will resort to the deadly parallel, the statement of General Taylor, on the one hand, and the findings of the courts, on the other.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### GENERAL TAYLOR

General Taylor imputes the falling back to cowardice.

General Taylor says the regiment could not be rallied.

General Taylor says that with exception of a handful of men who, under its gallant Colonel Bowles, joined the Mississippi regiment, the regiment took no further part in the action.

General Taylor says that the exceptional handful of men under Colonel Bowles joined the Mississippi regiment.

These differences are material; and, being cast into high relief, which is to be believed, the general or the

### THE COURTS

Colonel Bissell's court found that the regiment was ordered by its colonel to retreat; that the order, "Cease firing, and retreat," was given by its colonel to induce the regiment to retreat, and that the colonel did induce it to leave its position.

General Marshall's court found that from one hundred and fifty to two hundred men of the regiment were rallied by General Lane and other officers.

General Marshall's court found that the one hundred and fifty or two hundred men who were rallied remained on the field of battle during the rest of the day.

General Marshall's court found that the one hundred and fifty or two hundred men who were rallied attached themselves to the Mississippi regiment *and the Third Indiana regiment.*

courts? Admitting out of regard for certain susceptibilities that, man to man, the volunteer is not as effective in war as the regular, may not something in this instance be allowed to preponderance, since all military courts are composed of officers acting under the solemnity of an oath?

But here some one may suggest that General Taylor never saw the findings of either of the courts. It is true his report of the battle was forwarded before the trials were had; nevertheless, the facts remain as found, and are not to be lost sight of; indeed, that they were of subsequent discovery but intensifies the obstinacy of the man. The records of the courts engrossed and signed required his indorsement; so he *must* have seen them. If that were not so, however, there is evidence in plenty showing he was besought over and over, importuned, begged, for the credit of the brave men involved, the dead as well as the living, for the honor of a state and for the truth of history, to modify his report and make it conform to the findings of the courts. But without avail. Why? The reason must remain forever in theory. All I know is that commanders are charged with keeping the honor of their men, the honor of the humblest as well as that of those higher in rank, and that they always hail opportunities to change premature reports harsh in terms or mistaken in fact. To the rule Zachary Taylor is the only exception within my reading or personal experience.

Taking the finding of the court to be the truth, the small number found to have been rallied after the retreat—one hundred and fifty or two hundred men—may cause a smile, for *prima facie* it is a weakness in the argument. *That* I will now notice, and in the connection consider the propriety of the special compliment to Colonel Bowles by General Taylor—a compliment the more remarkable



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

in view of the opinion of the Bissell court touching the colonel's general ignorance and incapacity as a commander.

If in what I have now to say any statement should have the tone and color of an eye-witness, it is because, having reached the field so shortly after the battle—only two days—I think my opportunities for information fit me to speak of the things then in controversy there.

Colonel Bowles was a physician of scientific attainments, brave, ambitious, pleasant-mannered, easy-going; but withal it was presently demonstrated that he could not master the elementaries of the tactics in vogue at the time of his enlistment. To make the situation worse for him an extreme attachment had arisen between the regiment and its late colonel, Lane. That officer continued to tent with it after his promotion, and carried it with him as often as he changed location. The relation was precisely that which sprang up between General Taylor and the First Mississippi. Practically, General Lane remained colonel to the suppression of Colonel Bowles. He looked after the discipline and personal welfare of the men. He drilled them, and they were beautifully drilled. To this Colonel Bowles made no objection. His tastes ran in other lines. I myself have seen him while the regiment was on the parade-ground under General Lane ride into camp bringing botanical specimens of the flora of the adjacent country. He seemed incapable of jealousy. Certainly he had no sense of the awful responsibility of command in battle. The men treated him good-naturedly. None of them dreamed that under his order the ultimate martial issue to which they looked forward so ardently would turn out a life-long provocation of tears and shame.

The statement to which I now come will be a surprise to those who have of late been used to hearing of regi-

ments twelve hundred strong. At roll-call in the morning of February 23d, the total of muskets in the stacks of the Second Indiana did not exceed three hundred and sixty. Two companies (Walker's and Osborne's) had been drawn off the day before to help form a provisional battalion of rifles under Major Gorman, of the Third Indiana, leaving with the colors eight companies averaging forty-five men in the ranks.

Nor may it be overlooked that the Third Indiana having been placed in reserve by General Wool, all of actual command possessed by Brigadier-General Lane was the Second Indiana and O'Brien's battery of three guns. We have then the anomaly, brought about by the relation Lane bore to the Second Indiana, of a regiment going into battle with practically two colonels. One cannot help asking, what if in the turmoil and noise the orders of the two *colonels* should happen to conflict? Or, to illustrate, what if one of them should order "Forward," and the other, moved by a different inspiration, should order "Retreat?"

The air had been uncomfortably cold through the night of the 23d, so, what time they were not trying to sleep, the men walked behind their arms in stack, and sang and joked and amused themselves watching the flitting flashes of the combatant rifles on the overlooking heights.

By three o'clock everybody was on the alert. Then, dawn being yet in half-transparency, the deadly business of the day was begun by the Mexicans, of whom a swarm sprang out and spread darkly up and over the low foot-hills next the plateau, going to the assistance of their balking skirmishers. Then on an elevation, advanced well towards the Second Indiana, masses of men appeared dragging guns into position, five in all. General Lane, on his horse and watchful, knew that it

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

would never do for the fire of that battery (Ballarta's) to catch his companies unformed, and he ordered the regiment, "Fall in"—he, be it observed, not Colonel Bowles. Just then the quick report of artillery rolled over the plateau far and near. A few minutes later Colonel Churchill, of General Wool's staff, rode to tell Lane that the enemy was showing down in the road in feint, while the real attack was coming against him up the first ravine in his front. Without a word to Colonel Bowles, who was in rear of the extreme right company, Lane galloped round the left flank of the regiment to a position in front of the colors. He made there as if to deliver a speech; but, observing the alignment merely, he ordered, "Forward—guide centre—march," after which the double colonelcy was an established fact. Well, now, if the real colonel does not awake from his suppression and do some contrary thing which strikes him as the best! Promptly, as if on parade, the regiment stepped out, and O'Brien advanced his three guns.

Then out of the ravine, number one, towards which Lane was heading, a military band richly uniformed appeared and began playing the national air of Mexico. The regiment, observing it, cheered, and took step from the inspiring music. Only for a moment, however, for the band, which did not halt, was succeeded by an array seemingly interminable of infantry in double columns, flag after flag. Suddenly, space being cleared for the manœuvre, the enemy faced by the left flank, and became a line of battle masking another line. Up, too, from the same ravine in rapid succession other shakoed bodies poured and repeated the manœuvre of the first until two full divisions (Lombardini's and Pacheco's) moved forward, a splendid but terrible spectacle.

General Lane's object in advancing had been partly



to reach a point from which to control the ravine before the enemy gained the plateau. Seeing that it was too late, he halted the regiment and sent his aide to order O'Brien into battery; then, clearing the line of fire, he galloped to the rear by the left flank. Had he gone by the right flank, he could have spoken to the other colonel there and told him his wishes; as it was, he did all the commanding directly; at his word the men went to their knees; at his word they began firing.

Then O'Brien opening, Ballarta quickened all his guns, so that now, indeed, the battle for the plateau was joined.

Of the generalship I have nothing to say. My purpose is to help to an intelligent judgment of the conduct of the regiment in question.

There are but three hundred and sixty men in the ranks. Enfilading them from left to right, and within easy range, is a battery of five eight-pounder guns. Advancing upon them in brigade front, thus overlapping their own front, are infantry columns of two divisions variously estimated, the most recent authority putting their strength at seven thousand—eighteen to one!

The regiment is nearly a quarter of a mile in advance of the regiment (Bissell's Second Illinois) next it in the *echelon* of formation—literally on the plateau alone, and unsupported, except we reverse the order of things and call O'Brien's three guns a support.

Lastly, this is the regiment's first battle, and I see no need of stopping to tell what all that means. Set upon by everything that makes battle terrible—overwhelming numbers in front, bullets *swishing* about them, shells bursting, comrades falling—if General Taylor was right, and that a band of cowards, it will certainly break now.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Did they break?

In the box of every man of them there are forty cartridges, each with a bullet and three buckshot, and loading by rammer was a slow process; yet the Mexicans are brought to a halt, and their shooting grows wilder. The distance is about a hundred yards. Some of ours, to be sure, are white of face. A breeze blows fitfully lifting the smoke, so that now and then the very cool among them take deliberate aim, and that means death, for at home they are woodsmen and hunters. The first chill goes quickly—then they are all steady.

Dante, in his *Inferno*, speaks of all horrible sounds, but nowhere of music; so in battle the noises are mostly explosive discordances; still one can become so intent upon his individual performance, whether with sword, musket, or great gun, that action becomes automatic. That was what now happened. The men loaded and fired, and heard nothing, neither whistle of bullet nor shriek of shell or stricken comrade. How full the air was of missiles may be judged. In the first position of the regiment twenty-one of the forty cartridges were fired. Of the three hundred and sixty combatants in the ranks ninety dropped dead or disabled by wounds. The color-sergeant fell. Seeing the flag go down, Paymaster Dix, a volunteer aide with General Lane, being near, ran and picked it up, and kept it flying until Lieutenant Kunkel demanded it of him. Kunkel, brave fellow, bore it the rest of the day, a mark for the enemy, a brave sight for countrymen, if only they chose to see it. My poor friend and school-mate, Captain Kinder, was hit though not mortally wounded. The lancers overtook and killed him in an ambulance. General Lane, in the act of cheering, was shot in the right arm; a hot canister cauterized his cheek; his horse's lower jaw was broken. And now, on account of Bal-

larta's gunners, it was needful to shift the regiment. Forward or back? Just then General Lane saw the Mexicans in his front faltering, and he resolved to get closer to them. O'Brien must advance. Robinson, Lane's adjutant-general, delivered the order, and it was instantly obeyed. From his place behind McRae's company, the last one on the left, Lane called out, "Forward"—when horror of horrors! The right was going to pieces, and streaming to the rear fast as man could run.

The point of sovereign interest in this most dismal episode at Buena Vista is reached. In certain books, favorites of mine, the catastrophes cause me the keenest anguish. Such is the effect of the fall of Harold in Bulwer's novel of that name. Such, also, is the death of Uncas in Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*. So always, thinking of the break and flight of the Second Indiana in the midst of its well-doing, I have return of the same pang sharper of a conviction that had the brave fellows been held to the work three or five minutes longer, single-handed they would have routed the divisions before them. And then what glory would have been theirs! And how the state would have shone in the reflected light!

Thanks now to the courts, there is no mystery about the cause of the break. We know it was by order. We know, too, by whose order. Wherefore the question—as the court says Colonel Bowles was not a coward, as General Taylor pronounces him *gallant*, how could he upon his own volition have done a thing so shameful?

The circumstance is one about which everybody can have a theory. I will give mine. The moment General Lane, at the left of the regiment, conceived the idea of shifting it nearer the enemy, Colonel Bowles, over on the right, dismounted, and, too far off for instant com-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

munication with his chief, was in a confusion of senses begotten, doubtless, of a consciousness of incapacity, not to speak of the sounds that assailed him, discordant, furious, cyclonic. Old soldiers who have been in the heat of battles know how those sounds do actually buffet one as with blows, and how they are attended with stupefying sensations. Anyhow, holding his horse, if not behind it, he chanced to look through a rift in the smoke, and, not seeing O'Brien or his battery, was seized with an inspiration the opposite of General Lane's. He heard no voice of glory calling. If he saw an advantage, it was in getting the men and himself out of the tremendous broil; and not knowing how to do that by manœuvre, though there are a number of methods prescribed in the books; without thinking to send the flag back to indicate a place of rally; too much dazed, indeed, to remember that he himself was subject to order; too confused to consider anything but escape in the quickest possible time, he called out, "Cease firing, and—retreat," and in those words, doubtless, exhausting his slender store of tactical knowledge. Only the company nearest heard what he said, and they turned and gazed at him in wonder. A second time he raised his voice—"Cease firing, and—retreat."

Now no man shall say this was not an order. It was an order, and by one in authority. And at once all the shame of the flight that followed attaches to him who gave the order—the *gallant Colonel Bowles*.

In the next place there was a rally; and while in camp I myself heard the details of it, and am not permitted to doubt what I heard—else there is not honor among men.

General Lane, looking ahead, saw La Bosca, in the ravine, laying a broad trench across the line of flight, and rode to it full speed, taking Lieutenant-Colonel

## LEW WALLACE

Hadden and Major Cravens with him. Wheeling his horse on the thither side, he confronted the men. Fifteen of them in panic ran by him to the sheep-ranch nearly a mile away. There, with others from different commands, mostly riflemen dislodged, as we shall presently see, they did good service later in the forenoon. Quite one hundred and ninety of the regiment heard him and hastened to reform; and when presently Lieutenant Kunkel overtook the body with the colors, an accounting for the absent was easy. This was the table generally agreed upon in the leisure following the fight:

Killed and wounded . . . . .	90
Absent in care of the wounded . . . . .	40
Rallied by Colonel Bowles . . . . .	25
Rallied at the sheep-ranch . . . . .	15
Rallied by General Lee and other officers . . .	190
	<hr/>
	360

Is it reasonable, now, asking more proof of me? Out of a total of three hundred and sixty men, two hundred and fifteen back under their own colors, ought, I insist, to be fact enough of itself, the question being whether there was a rally. Then, as to courage, ninety killed and wounded before the order to retreat—ninety out of three hundred and sixty—one-fourth of the entire firing-line! How often has battle anywhere such a record of proportional loss?

We come next to the compliment to Colonel Bowles paid, as has been seen, by General Taylor. The colonel ordered the retreat; he rallied what his eulogist calls a handful of the men; then, rifle in hand, he spent the rest of the day a private soldier, loading and firing in the front or rear rank of a strange regiment. What is gallantry in a private may be unqualified shame in an



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

officer. This bit of military philosophy was never so pointedly illustrated as by Colonel Bowles when he stepped into the ranks of the Mississippians. The situation at the moment is worth an effort at appreciation. It is after the rally on the farther side of La Bosca. The one hundred and ninety of the Second Indiana are about to attach themselves to Colonel Davis's command. They are under their own colors. Lieutenant-Colonel Hadden is in command. The crisis is terrible. Where is Colonel Bowles? I know nothing in war so strange as his conduct in that thrilling instant. With his rallied "handful" he approaches the Mississippians. First securing a rifle and cartridges—let us suppose from a wounded man or one dead—he takes place in the ranks unobserved by the strangers. Near by is his own regiment. Their colors are his colors. He is entitled to command them. They are the men who voted him colonel, with whom he has tented and marched and lived the whole of his soldier life. He must have seen them—he must have seen the flag. Why did he turn away and abandon them to become for the time a Mississippian? Why prefer the strangers? Why? The question has a depth beyond me. But—and this is the application—what of *gallantry* is there in the behavior?<sup>1</sup>

Finally, on the point of cowardice. I am a dissenter

<sup>1</sup> General O. O. Howard is the most recent author of a biography of General Taylor. In the book he adopts his subject's view of the conduct of the Second Indiana, thinking it not worth while to look behind that officer's report of the battle of Buena Vista.

Here is a sample of his dealing. Summarizing—page 271—he says: "Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Mississippi, Texas, and some Indiana men had fought hard all this dreadful day." By the table on page 192, General Howard is right. There were *some* Indiana men who fought hard; indeed, there were some wounded, others actually killed. As he has the reputation of a Christian gentleman, not to speak of him as a brave soldier, the table quoted is especially recommended to him.

## LEW WALLACE

to the opinion often urged that the sovereign test of the conduct of a corps in battle is the list of casualties; still, to apply that test in this instance, here is a table of losses by commands at Buena Vista compiled from official returns:

Corps	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Aggregate	Corps	Killed	Wounded	Missing	Aggregate
General staff.....	1	3		4	Brought over.....	74	148	4	223
1st Dragoons.....		7		7	Arkansas Cavalry.....	17	32	4	53
2d Dragoons.....		2		2	2d Kentucky Cavalry..	44	57	1	102
3d Artillery.....	1	22	2	25	1st Illinois regiment...	29	18		47
4th Artillery.....	5	21		26	2d Illinois regiment...	48	75	3	116
Mississippi Rifles.....	40	56	2	98	2d Indiana regiment...	32	71	4	107
Kentucky Cavalry.....	27	37		61	3d Indiana regiment...	9	56		65
					Texas Volunteers.....	14	2	7	23
	74	148	4	223		267	459	23	746

When the intelligent reader, far removed from the petty jealousies of the men who fought at Buena Vista, reads that table, and sees, as he certainly will, that there was but one regiment with more casualties than the Second Indiana, he will wonder greatly, but at nothing so much as the general commanding. There may even come to him reading a realization of the lamentable fact that a man may have been a successful general and popular president of the United States, yet lack the elements without which no one can be truly great—justice and truth.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XX

Departure from Walnut Springs, May 24, 1847—Mustered out—  
Reception at New Orleans—Sergeant S. Prentiss—Robbed of  
savings—Return to Indianapolis—Resume law—*The Fair God*—  
Apply for license again from the Supreme Court.

ON May 24, 1847, the First Indiana left Walnut Springs going to "the States" for muster out.

At the mouth of the Rio Grande, while waiting for transports, I strolled out to the dunes so thickly peopled with our dead. The revelations were shocking. Reporting what I had seen, the good colonel ordered me to take a working party and rebury all exposed remains. The sorrowful duty done, I lingered to take a farewell look at the shifting cemetery, wondering if the government would ever set about bringing the bones of the brave back to Indiana. Fifty years are a long time out of one's life to wait for anything; and now I know *that* accomplishment will never be. The poor fellows are abandoned. Even the home folk last to love them are themselves departed. Only the Great Gulf lifts a voice for them—an inarticulate, everlasting moan.

At New Orleans, a number of regiments having arrived with terms of service expiring, the city received us. A poor affair, indeed, cheap, and unworthy mention were it not that Sergeant S. Prentiss was the chosen orator. I went to hear him.

The absence of decorations along the streets struck me dismally while passing to the square selected for the ceremony. Cut off for such a time from newspapers, I

had failed to appreciate that the war had been discussed with such bitterness that at least half the people viewed it as an unholy invasion. Of course all holding that opinion were unwilling to jubilate. They kept their flags hid and stuck to their shops.

The preparations in the square were meagre and disappointing. There was the usual out-door platform of boards, raised three or four feet from the ground, railed off on three sides, and decorated with a flag tied to a corner post. Scarcely two thousand people stood about the platform, which was crowded with field-officers and black-coated civilians of aldermanic proportions. Failing to get a seat among the dignitaries, I elbowed myself back of the stand, where, with my toes in a crack of the base-boards, and half swinging by the fingers from the railing, I made out to see the speaker when he arose.

Mr. Prentiss was at his height of fame. I remember his appearance distinctly. He was rather low in stature, full-chested, clean-shaven, and faultlessly dressed. His head was ample, round, superbly set. The brows arched high, allowing the large eyes to fill with light — eyes that would have made an ugly face beautiful. Eyes, countenance, head, mouth permissive of every variety of expression, profile, attitude, the whole man, in fact, brought me to think of pictures of Lord Byron. Like Byron, moreover, he was clubbed in one foot. I had intended taking a glance at him, hear his opening, then go away. To my astonishment, when he sat down more than an hour had passed. I had heard every word in rapt unconsciousness of my discomforts. In moments when his face was turned fully to me I caught the seeming transfiguration elsewhere alluded to. No other orator ever held me so completely. Of the singers whom I have been permitted to hear, not even the divine



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Patti ruled me half so tyrannically. Bearded and bronzed as were the soldiers of his audience, they cried till the tears left glistening paths down their cheeks. I alighted from my perch sore and cramped; but from that day to this I have never regretted the year left behind me as a soldier in Mexico; neither have I at any time since been troubled with a qualm about the propriety even to righteousness of the war. Saying nothing about the glory won, our country has been in every respect greater and better of its consequences.

The voyage up the Mississippi from New Orleans gave me some spare hours to resolve upon a course of life now that life was to be begun again. There were two hundred and eighty dollars of savings in my trunk. Doubtless the store could be increased at home. After much reflection, the first I can now recall as in the least tinged with anxiety, I decided to give myself six months to college work somewhere. Latin and mathematics were especially in my mind, the latter because it was a branch in which I was particularly weak.

But here, too, the unexpected happened. While I was debating where I should go, and what institution of learning should be favored with my patronage, somebody relieved me of my money. Fortunately there remained enough in my pocket to take me to Indianapolis. The loss was serious; at the same time the sharpest sting in the mishap was in knowing with a certainty, not admitting of doubt, that a brother officer, Captain ———, for whom my affection had been very positive, was the thief. To prove the crime upon him was beyond me; wherefore I held my peace.

A week in Indianapolis, given chiefly to renewals of acquaintanceship, served me for rest, and I then settled down again in my father's office, mixing study with pettifogging. For society my inclinations were still of

the faintest kind; indeed, I had but one object all alive—to capture the license formerly denied me by the Supreme Court.

Where one's wants are few and simple as mine, it ought not in our country to be difficult to earn enough to meet them. It was so at least in my case. Opportunities to turn the traditional honest penny came frequently. Among them I remember offers of agencies of this and that. These were always declined.

Shortly after settling down, when the resolution was beginning to be strong with me, one night I unearthed the manuscript of *The Fair God*, or rather the commonplace book, sixteen inches long and twelve in width, closely ruled, containing the work far as finished. I had been to Mexico now, and knew somewhat of the country, having breathed its air and looked into its sky by night and day, and seen those of its people the descendants of the Aztecs. Should I go on with the work? I turned the covers, and read here and there, and the characters passed before me, all of whom I had written—the brave natives, king, princes, priests, people, and the Spaniards, even Cortés, the boldest where all were bold. Then I set in and read to the last word of the last paragraph. I read the night out. Pastimes are undertakers who bury the hours for nothing. What of it? The writing had been a habit, and a good one, and I resolved to stick to it.

I applied at length for admission to the bar of the Circuit Court, and license to practise was granted me. Still, I did not feel myself a lawyer. That result awaited a formal certificate signed by Isaac Blackford.

This sketch will expose the jumble of employment with which the remainder of the year 1847 was filled. A break then ensued.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

[Fragments of an old journal give an idea of what was passing in the young man's heart. To it, he made confession.—S. E. W.]

INDIANAPOLIS, *July*, 1847.

Half-past eleven P.M.

This evening I picked up a copy of Tupper and read his effusion on "Marriage." This sentence seems familiar to my thoughts, "If thou art to have a wife of thy youth, she is now living on the earth; therefore think of her and pray for weal; yea, though thou hast not seen her."

A thousand times have I had the same idea! Even in childhood we have pleasant vagaries of love. They come to us as views of a clear-blue sky through narrow rifts of dark clouds. We hail them with delight and imagine them heaven. Even in my half-wild boyhood there lived a haunting yearning in my heart to see, hear, and live in presence of her whom Fate was to give me as the wife of my youth.

Many a time have I stood beneath the stars, and gazing up at their bright shinings, mumbled over every form of charm and incantation my fancy conceived, hoping all the time I might accidentally hit upon one which the Chaldees used to subdue by their mysterious power and learn from them the locked-up secrets of the future. Had I been successful the first picture I would have had them paint me would have been the miniature of my unbeheld but somewhere living wife whose name the Destiny of mine had written among "the poetry of Heaven." Not only have I asked it of the stars, but my curiosity has carried me to more unpoetic lengths. I never meet a good, pretty girl, but I've asked of my soul, expecting its immortality of nature to endow it with at least that much miraculous knowledge, "Is it she?" When will the radiance of that other life fall over mine?

I am a believer in Destiny, and no sceptic to the beautiful theory that the incomplete heart will recognize its

## LEW WALLACE

perfection instantly it beholds it. I would have made a fiery, energetic follower of Cromwell, or, had I been a Frenchman, would have worshipped the great "N" of "*Le petit Corporal*" with as deep devotion as the Crusader worshipped the holy symbol of his cause. I have always found the enthusiasm of love the wildest, while that of ambition is the steadiest in men's hearts. My noblest dream of life has been one of fame, but my holiest of her whom Fate shall give me for a wife. She must have high qualities to command me. In my aspirations her spirit must follow mine in my war for the world's bubbles, not as a squaw her savage husband, but by my side, a woman's yet an equal spirit. Then I shall tread the *steppes* of a new existence with her. When will my dream come true?

. . . . .

What a place for dreaming was Old Mexico! There in the introspection of idleness my ideals almost took shape.

Many a time have I lain on the soft sand, and while the ocean poured its eternal hymn in my scarce conscious sense, watched the cold, round moon as she looked down on the shadows of night and the seething foam of the waters, and tortured imagination to give me a picture of the beloved, the unbeheld. I have somewhere read a wild legend of a German hunter, who, in some of his wanderings amid the Hartz mountains, came across a romantic cascade. Tired, wearied out, he lay down on its banks and went to sleep. In his slumber a form (a woman's) appeared to his vision. And the form was lovely, transparent as a moonbeam, and bright as a star-halo. It addressed him in terms of love, and seemed to watch over him while he slept. After his slumber passed away he returned home. But the vision of the cascade haunted his memory, and in vain he sought to shake it off. Under its influence he revisited the fountain. Again the wild, beautiful spirit greeted him with its low voice. Then a frantic love assumed the mastery of the hunter's heart. Day after day, night after night, his



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

wasting form was laid on the green bank of the singing waterfall. Ever he sighed, murmured, dreamed. The strength forsook his limbs—the blood melted away in his heart. He loved the water-spirit to madness, but she was of the race of souls and as such could not interwed a mortal. To possess her, therefore, he must die. So, one day when the earth was all bright but his heart all dark, while the fairy sang him a song of unimaginable melody, he stretched his arms to grasp the shadowy enchantress, and plunged over into the roaring caldron of the cascade.

My Egeria is of the race of mortals. I shall go to her for wisdom, as Numa did to his, and to win her I need not die. She is waiting for me somewhere in the cool shadows of to-night, and I wait for her.

She will love me, and I shall make her famous by my pen and glorious by my sword.

[Our friend, Mary Clemmer, has written a description of the dreamer beset with aerial fancies living in the golden age of twenty-one. A portion of her letter may be copied without treachery to her memory.]

“Lewis Wallace, of Indiana, is in outward seeming our hero of Provence wearing the bright spurs won on the field of Fornovo. The youthful chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*, valiant, wise, and loyal.

“He is fashioned of the refined clay of which nature is most sparing, nearly six feet high, perfectly straight, with a fine fibred frame all nerve and muscle, and so thin he cannot weigh more than a hundred and thirty pounds. He has profuse black hair, a dark, beautiful face, correct in every line, keen, black eyes deeply set, with a glance that on occasion may cut like fine steel. Black beard and mustache conceal the firm mouth and chin. His modest, quiet manner is the only *amende* that can be made for being so handsome. In a crowd anywhere you would single him out as a king of men.

## LEW WALLACE

“Marked for action rather than words, he is habitually reticent, yet when the time comes for speech is ready with eloquent words, given with a voice at once sweet and strong. A man of convictions, earnest in every nerve of his being, intensely earnest ”

## XXI

June, 1848—The Whig national convention—Nomination and election of Taylor—Edit a campaign paper opposing Taylor—Indiana refuses to vote for Taylor—A deficit of six hundred dollars—Left in the lurch—Become a Democrat of the straitest sect.

IN June, 1848, the Whig national convention met at Philadelphia, and on the fourth ballot nominated Zachary Taylor for the presidency over Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and Winfield Scott.

This result had been in the air since the victories of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, an anticipation of immense trouble to the politicians, none of whom knew if General Taylor were Whig or Democrat, or if he had any politics. After the fall of Monterey both parties had claimed him; in local meetings both nominated him; while on his side, with a naïveté suspiciously childlike and bland, he was prodigal of thanks and mailed acceptances indiscriminately. Yet it was said he was not dishonest; he wanted to be president, but dreamed of the great honor of a spontaneous offering from the whole people. Finally, Buena Vista came along, and it was decisive. That he was chosen over General Scott was not strange; nevertheless, one does marvel that the Whig party turned its thumbs down on Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, its makers, for a soldier who, when at last driven to definition, reluctantly admitted himself a Whig, and could not see why a formal acceptance of nomination by the Whig national convention should estop him from a like formal accept-

ance of a later nomination by the Democratic convention of the state of New Jersey.

The nomination of General Taylor found me in the most sophomoric period of my life. It will provoke a smile, I know; yet I actually believed my opposition could seriously shake the old hero's popularity and chances of election.

Though Whig by birth and raising—intensely Whig—it was impossible for me to forget the repeated punishments the First Indiana regiment had suffered from the nominee; nor more could I acquit him of responsibility for the crowded state of the Potter's field at the mouth of the Rio Grande. I remembered, also, his helping hand in dishonoring the Second Indiana at Buena Vista, and the dogged refusal to modify his report in accordance with the facts and opinions of the two courts which investigated the conduct of that unfortunate regiment. I remembered the effect of it all upon the credit of the state with an intensity of resentment which I confess has outlived my youth.

The interest with which I followed the march of events through 1847, down to the convention of June, 1848, may be imagined. I availed myself of every opportunity to declaim against General Taylor. When opportunities were wanting, I sometimes made them. Then, at the meeting of the convention, with what passionate anxiety its action was awaited! Could it be that the delegation from Indiana would support him? At last the report: Taylor, 7; Clay, 1; Scott, 4.

I had not demolished General Taylor—that was plain. After wrestling awhile with the pangs of defeat, I rallied, and resolved to go on with the fight. He should not have the vote of Indiana in the electoral college, if I could help it.

My first idea was to take the stump, in furtherance



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

of which I wrote a speech aimed at such pride as belonged to the state. The speech dealt with General Taylor and Indiana in the war. It was brimful of invective. *The Philippics of Demosthenes* served me as models. The trial of a case before a justice of the peace took me to the country about the time the screed was well memorized. There were seventy-five or a hundred people present. Before the dispersal began I suggested to his honor, if he would call the assemblage to order I would speak on politics. He did so; and, in observing the effect upon the audience, I noticed the Democrats cheered in season and out, while the Whigs looked glum and made no sign. One old man, I remember, came up to me and asked, significantly, "Your father is living, isn't he?" The experiment was not to my satisfaction, but fortune helped me.

The year will doubtless be recollected as fruitful in presidential candidates. Three parties put tickets in the field—the Whigs with Zachary Taylor, the Democrats with Lewis Cass, the Free-Soilers with Martin Van Buren. The latter were known as "Barnburners"—exactly why, I do not know. They had often been, moreover, the subject of my best denunciation as a conglomeration with but one idea—the abolition of slavery. But now it was to be taken seriously, having the airs of organization. It had even held a convention at Indianapolis, well attended and zealous.

The day after that convention I was surprised by a call from three gentlemen, two of them of Indianapolis, and among the wealthiest residents of the city. Why I do not name them will presently appear. They said they were a committee appointed to provide for a weekly campaign paper to be the organ of the Free-Soil party in Indiana. They had fixed upon a Mr. G——r and myself to conduct the organ. Mr. G——r had consent-

ed; would I consent? They kindly agreed to give me a day for consideration.

Now, my war upon candidate Taylor was limited to Indiana. He could hope nothing from Democrats. Good strategy, on the other hand, pointed to weakening the Whigs, for whom, as a rule, abolition had the fewest terrors. Taylor would be a slave-holder's president. His election would mean the extension of slavery. That, as anybody could see, was the string to pull with Whigs. I cared nothing for Lewis Cass or for Martin Van Buren. My only thought was to keep Indiana out of Taylor's column of states. Dignity, honor, self-respect demanded that much of the state.

In the succeeding interview with the committee I inquired if they were to be understood as offering me compensation. They replied with candor that I must take chances with the paper; if, at the end of the campaign, there was a sum in excess of the outlay, Mr. G——r and I might divide it between us. But, I said, suppose there is a deficit; and I ventured to suggest having heard that newspapers were notoriously expensive and dangerous enterprises. Then they broadly assured me if, in the outcome, there was a loss, they would see to it that we were made whole; all we had to do on that score was to be as economical and careful as the interests involved would allow.

Then ensued quite six months of hard work. My associate shared the labor with me fairly. He took the business management. We had no assistants. Week after week, month after month—at last the election! General Taylor became president, but not—and I devoutly thanked God for it—*not with the electoral vote of Indiana*. Having grown to think and feel the fight mine personally, and accounting the result in Indiana a victory, I was happy, and ranted and cheered, and

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

made myself a burden, especially to my father, whose Whig friends insisted on holding him responsible for my treason.

Ere long our printer came to me for a settlement. I referred him to Mr. G——r, who had the books. He said Mr. G——r was not in the city. Where was he? Several days on the road to California. To find the books was of importance. They had been, I found, well and honestly kept, and were balanced showing an indebtedness of over six hundred dollars. With the accounts in hand, it took me a short time to find Messrs. —— and ——, to remind them of their pledge to make me whole. First one declined, then the other. I pleaded with them. So many months of labor gone, so much time. I had trusted them because they were rich, and professed Christians, known to me all my life. They could at least help me in part. No, not a cent, and they gave no reason. I folded up the statement and left them. What had I to show? Wisdom in the shape of distrust of my fellow-men, counterbalanced, in part, at least, by having worked at the case as a printer. I knew how to punctuate, an acquisition that abides with me. Did the worst come, I had the rudiments of a trade.

The two Christian gentlemen lived long, and passed me often on the street without ever thinking it worth their while to stop and ask me how I was getting on. The debt dragged with me. At the end of the sixth year I lifted the last note. They died in the fulness of their time, and have gone to their reward.

The outcome of the affair may prove curious. The Whigs had elected General Taylor; my connection with the "Barnburners" had been purely instructive; and seeing no middle ground politically for me, I became a Democrat—one of the straitest of the sect.

## XXII

Major Isaac C. Elston—His home—Susan Elston—College commencement, July, 1848—Courtship—Receive license from Supreme Court.

IN the day of my college career there lived in Crawfordsville a merchant named Elston. His full name on a visiting-card, title and all, would have read—Major Isaac C. Elston.

Major Elston had settled in the town when it was a belonging of the wilderness. Out of a dry-goods store he builded a fair fortune. Then, widening his operations, he bought the site of Michigan City, platted it, sold lots, and became a rich man. His dwelling-house, in the midst of a primeval woods, was the best in the county, and it was furnished to correspond, and the fame thereof went abroad. People visited it just to see things. I heard some of them talking one day of a sofa in the lower hall. What was a sofa? It was altogether unlikely that Major Elston would ever invite me to his house; but was I for that to grow up without sight of a sofa?—a mahogany sofa covered with hair-cloth, so the description ran. I took the liberty of inviting myself to see the wonder, and had my wish, though not without peril; for if caught in the trespass my appearance, so defiant of common requirement, would have justified any suspicion. In the same way it came to my knowledge that Major Elston had recently imported a piano. What was a piano? Those of whom I asked, hardly better informed than myself, told me it was a



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

big musical machine. The description excited my curiosity the more. And again I invited myself into the major's house, and saw the sight without discovery; whereupon I was beset with a greater wonder. How was the playing done? I laid in wait for the solution. One evening the double parlor was a wonder of brilliance. A party was in progress. I worked my way, Indian-like, to a window through which the whole interior was in view. In a little while, sure enough, a young lady went to the machine, opened it, and began a song with an accompaniment. I remember the song:

“One little, two little, three little Indians,  
Four little, five little, six little Indians.”

And so on for quantity.

In 1848 a college commencement drew me back to Crawfordsville. As usual on that day, the town was flung open to visitors. Among those to entertain was Mrs. Henry S. Lane, wife of the lieutenant-colonel of the First Indiana regiment, and second daughter of Major Elston. I had the pleasure of attending. In the midst of the gayety, Major Elston's third daughter appeared. Susan, then eighteen, recently from her graduation at a Quaker school for girls in Poughkeepsie, New York, bearing herself modestly as a veiled nun.

Fifty years and more! I can blow the time aside lightly as smoke from a cigar, and have a return of that evening with Miss Elston, and her blue eyes, wavy hair, fair face, girlish manner, delicate person, and witty flashes to vivify it.

There are young people who think a man past seventy may not be moved by the love of his youth, if he has recollection of it at all. The opinion, I assure them, is an attack upon themselves—they who are in turn to

grow old. There was never one, albeit beyond the sage's limit of life, to forget the days he went wooing. Some there are, doubtless, the unsuccessful for instance, who would like to forget them. Be the truth told simply. Far from so much as dimming the recollection, the years but make it holier, until after-while the old man, nothing loath to expose his whole life else, keeps that dear property to himself. So much I extract from my own experience.

Yet, having undertaken to write my life, would the life be complete without the story of how it became subject to its most benign influence? Let me not falter in confession here. What of success has come to me, all that I am, in fact, is owing to her, the girl of whom I am speaking. The admission is broad, yet it leaves justice but half done.

She was beautiful in my eyes when I first saw her; and the word is not used in its common sense; dolls are pretty; so are faces in wax, if only they are fresh and clean. The beauty she gave me to see that evening in the social blaze was after Wordsworth's ideal:

"A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
A creature not too bright and good  
For human nature's daily food,  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles."

The promises were in her face when next I saw her in plain daylight; and after all the trials of years come and gone—now—the same promises are as bank-notes redeemed, and there is no need of them more.

When May 6, 1902 comes round, and repeats itself in budding roses, it will be golden-wedding day with us. The advent may freshen recollection of the glad

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

time, and I bid it welcome in advance, but I will not for that delay the record I have for her as my wife. I have been subject to her; and her gentle soul has controlled me, and bent me to her wishes, but unselfishly, and always for my good, and always so deftly that I was as one blind to the domination. My temper has never been so hot she could not lay it. She has decided me in doubt, defended me against interruptions, saved me my time at the sacrifice of her own, cheered me when down at heart, lured me back to my tasks when the tempter would have whisked me away, held my hand in defeat, and rejoiced with me in my triumphs. In my work she has helped me to the word, and been my one honest critic. Often in the long journey when, at the parting of the ways, I have stopped bewildered, afraid to go on, unwilling to go back, she has set me in the right way, and even gone before to assure me. Her faith in me began with the beginning, when I was unknown and uncertain of myself, and the world all too ready to laugh at my attempts. Hers is a high nature, a composite of genius, common-sense, and all best womanly qualities. The marvel, her memory, has always been at my service. Most fortunately for me, the books she loves are the best, and she knows them by heart. With her in call, I have no use for dictionaries of quotation.

Nor less is she a musician. Not as the divas are, to fill vast interiors and astonish audiences in multitude, but a minnesinger loving to soothe vexed children with lullabies, and set old people to living their lives over again with ballads redolent of things noble and good. Now, grievous to say, a tone has gone out of her voice, and I miss it, and so does she. Sometimes she speaks of it as one of the robberies of old time, but I say no, and insist that she does not practise enough. Still, of long evenings, when the house is quiet and the fire burns,

LEW WALLACE

she will bring out the guitar, and with fingers loyal to her feeling as ever, give me the song I have all along most loved, and which, should she be near when I come to die, I would have her sing for the help there will be in it to the spirit crossing the bar. There may be a reader curious to see the lines; and I give them:

“THREE DREAMS

“I dreamed a dream of boyhood’s days,  
Of high and wild and careless glee.  
Around my path ten thousand rays  
Sparkling and dancing seemed to be.

“Dream of my boyhood, stay, O stay!  
Let me thus sport my life away.  
Dream of my boyhood, stay, O stay!—  
Alas, alas! It fades away.

“I dreamed a dream of early youth,  
A wilderness of sweetest dreams.  
I scarce know what of love and truth  
Bathing my soul in heavenly beams.

“Dream of my youth, sweet dream, O stay!  
Let me thus love my life away.  
Dream of my youth, sweet dream, O stay!—  
Alas, alas! It fades away!

“I dreamed a dream of Manhood’s prime,  
Mixed dream of triumph and of strife;  
But she at morn and evening’s chime  
Was there to bless and cheer my life.

“Dream of my prime, stay, O stay!  
Thy features court the opening day.  
Dream of my prime, stay, O stay!—  
Alas! thou too must fade away.”



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

It must not be imagined that I won Miss Elston without trouble. She had many admirers, of whom four were pronouncedly competitors. I believe I may venture to speak of them without mentioning their names; though as a further security against harm, they are all dead. One was a lawyer—a great one, too. He might have given me more vexation had he been younger and less subject to wine. The second was a middle-aged gentleman, who rested his cause on two arguments—he was very rich, and would build his love a splendid house. A strong plea, it must be admitted. The third was a business man. Fortunately for me, he was unaware of the importance of affecting a little sentiment. The last of the list was a preacher, who rested his case on an appeal to the religious inclinations of his idol. In the moment of supreme confidence, when he may be supposed to have been on his knees, Grandison style, telling of his passion and his future, he let it be known that he was to be a missionary, and went so far even as to expose an arrangement by which he was to be sent to the Gaboon—wherever that might be. One suitor failed lacking sentiment, this one failed lacking common-sense.

I have admitted trouble. In telling whence it came I know there will be demur. *She* will say I am too free in disclosure; and I am not sure but she is right. There was opposition. It was insisted there was no promise of good in me—nothing to rest a hope upon in the wayward youth. This meant simply that the outlawry of my boyhood was in the judgment, and I never blamed the parents. Only they did not understand me.

I carried my pleading to the very principal in the controversy—the real party in interest. And this blood in me of the old man now quickens like a lad's, often as I revert to the discovery that the faith of

## LEW WALLACE

my love was not of the fainting kind. A better day would come, and she agreed to wait for it. The years were ours—three years we waited, and then I led her home, she trusting me when no one else did.

Long, long afterwards she wrote me "A Song of Songs." Here is one verse:

"Our morning dreams are broken,  
And castles day by day  
With far and floating banners  
In distance fade away.  
Dim arcade and airy tower  
I never more may see,  
But all my lost ideals  
Are found again in thee."

It has always been a wonder to me how old people lose their heads dealing with the love-affairs of the young; that is why they cannot see that opposition is bread and wine to the infatuation they deplore—I call it infatuation out of respect for them. Let us consider. Nonsense, nonsense! you say. Yes, I know; yet—if in their passing, men stop to wring all the nonsense out of their lives, what threadbare rags they would be left holding.

In the first place, the romance of the situation began with the first word of protest. In the next place, I had been willing to work in the hope of making something of myself for self's sake; now here was a new incentive to move me, and its objects of attainment were immediate. I hate repetitions, and therefore advance, summarizing. At the fall term of the Supreme Court, 1849, I again applied for license. Three or four days after the examination I received a carefully sealed official envelope addressed, "Lewis Wallace, Esquire, Attorney-at-Law." It contained two enclosures: one

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the coveted license, signed "Isaac Blackford, Judge"; the other, a brief explanatory note over the same signature with a postscript—"Permit me to congratulate you upon your safe return from Mexico." So, so! If Blackstone could unbend and indulge in poetry, was it strange that Isaac Blackford could be humorous? I thought of the flippancy of which I had been guilty, and reddened to the tips of my ears. There was but one thing to be done, I went straight to the judge and apologized. He laughed, and said he understood it; boys would be boys. He also invited me to attend court next morning. In calling the roll of attorneys for motions, he was sure it would be pleasant to me to hear my name. Who would have thought the veteran lawyer could have been so delicate in attention?

## XXIII

Return to Covington—Senator Hannegan—A wager—D. W. Voorhees—The violin—Judge Ristine—The political meeting at Chambersburg—Mr. M——y—Justice Glasscock—To Danville, Illinois, with Voorhees—Abraham Lincoln.

I HAD now, it will be observed, three incentives to action—bread, ambition, and the obligations inseparable from the dear soul then mine in solemn covenant.

The first thing in order was to choose a location in which to open a law office. I turned from Indianapolis, for the reason that few things are more trying to a young man than to bring the elders who have known him from childhood to admit the possibility of his knowing more than they even in a specialty. This is certainly true of the elders who may have predestined him to the gallows.

The influences that determine men halting, and which finally give them direction, are sometimes amusing, sometimes trifling, but they are always curious. I did not go to New York or to Cincinnati—Chicago was then only a great city in promise—but Covington, the village on the Wabash already familiar to the reader as my playground in childhood. When I remind him of its distance from Crawfordsville—scant thirty miles—he will at once perceive the influence that drew me there.

It was not merely to be within easy ride of the fair partner of my fortunes; to deny it the chiefest inducement would be a poor return for the devotion she was showing; still there was another motive. Of my event-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ual success at the bar I had no doubt; so in secret I cherished a wish to make my emergence from obscurity under the eyes, as it were, of the distrustful authority in Elston castle; the naturalness of the prompting must relieve every suspicion of pettiness.

The office I opened in Covington corresponded in furnishment with my means. A table, a stove, the revised statutes of the state, the ordinary text-books, Barbour's *Justice of the Peace*, the Supreme Court *Reports* to date, Blackford's inclusive, constituted my law library. To complete the inventory, I must not forget a violin, to which I was addicted, though not offensively, since my practice in that line was limited to hours when the town was asleep. If Thomas Jefferson and Governor Whitcomb did not disdain the seductions of the bow, why should I?

My "shingle" was in plain black and white—"Lew Wallace, Attorney-at-Law." The day I nailed it to the cheek of my office door, I sat down and marshalled my assets in cash. The total was one dollar and seventy-five cents, the dollar being in paper money. That same day came the announcement of the failure of the bank issuing that note. Nothing daunted, I continued boarding at the hotel.

Edward A. Hannegan was the great man of the town, and he ruled it baronially. As United States senator of democratic persuasion, he had distinguished himself in the debate on the boundary-line between our possessions on the Pacific coast and those of the British. The famous utterance, "54—40, or fight," had been his. Could his policy have been resolutely carried out, the tremendous fortification on the northern shore of Vancouver's Island known as the Esquimalt would not now be dominating the inlet to Puget Sound. More recently he had returned from a residence in Berlin as minister.

I have spoken of him as orator. It may be added that he was a man of courtly grace, passionate in his friendships and his hates. To a faculty of attraction, he had the opposite faculty of repulsion, both in larger degree than I have ever seen them in the same person. He and my father had been warm friends in despite of politics. I was much surprised one morning by a visit from him at my office. Besides giving me encouragement, he invited me to make myself free at his house and study. Returning the call, I was astonished at his library, so completely did it cover the world of miscellaneous literature. The privilege of that study was much more than a sounding compliment.

I recall Senator Hannegan as attorney defending a man indicted for murder. In the examination of a witness an objection was offered to one of his questions. The case turned upon the point involved. If the objection were sustained, the conviction of his client was inevitable. He met the opposition with an eloquence so passionate that for years after the speech continued one of the legends of the court. The ruling was in his favor, followed by a verdict of acquittal. His reputation was that of an impromptu speaker. In this instance, however, the argument was so perfect, the sentence so finished, that I smelled the oil of the lamp in it, and to decide a wager he was consulted in his study.

"Mr. Hannegan," my opponent said, "we have come to have you settle a bet. The dispute is whether the speech you made in course of the examination of (giving the name of the witness) was prepared or delivered on the spur of the moment. My friend here says it was carefully prepared; I say it was off-hand. If not offensive, what do you say?"

Hannegan, smiling, went to a drawer and took out a manuscript.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Here," he said; "if you remember the speech, young gentlemen, this will dispose of the issue between you better than my dixit."

We took the script, and it was the speech word for word without an interlineation or an erasure.

The young gentleman—slightly to modify Senator Hannegan's polite address—thus party of the second part to the wager has since become one of the familiars of the republic. There is little need of more than the mention of his name, so universally known are he and his career. Daniel W. Voorhees opened a law office in Covington about the time of my appearance for the same purpose. Three or four years before his death a trifling cloud arose between us, which, while enough to break our intimacy, failed to weaken the respect we had for each other. A great political party is a mourner at his tomb; yet, of the multitude, few outside his children miss him more than I do, or send sincerer regrets after him. Our bouts, usually in some justice's court, were frequent. They were rough-and-tumble, or, in wrestling parlance, catch-as-catch-can; sometimes almost to the fighting-point. But it was not in his nature to bear malice. I can yet hear the creak of the door of my office as, without a knock, he threw it open and walked in—generally the night of the day of an encounter—a tall man of genuine gladiatorial port. I can hear the greeting with which he threw himself on a chair: "Well, Lew, I got you to-day," or "you got me," according to the fact. "Come, now, put your work up and let's have the fiddle." And with a word out the fiddle came; whereupon there was truce and presently a perfected peace. The "Cracovienne" and "Arkansas Traveller" were his favorites. But as the night wore away he would call for "Annie Laurie," and keep me at it. He was in love then, and engaged, and

—the reader knows my story. “Dan” was the first to marry. At his house-opening nothing would do but that I should help at the first dinner. Mrs. Voorhees prepared it herself. She was a novice, and there were accidents of course. How we did laugh at them!—she the merriest of the company.

Business was shy in the beginning. Nobody knew me. Occasionally there came one wanting a conveyance or a contract written; the fees, however, were not enough to help me meet accruing bills. My host of the hotel was lenient; unfortunately there were necessities more intolerant. The rust on my shoes would shine through the veneer of blacking; a sere struck my coat; and, by no means least, the time arrived when I flinched, seeing a *vis-à-vis* of this or that sex studying a little too closely the visible parts of my shirt. Nevertheless, I held on. At length I reached the turn—none too soon.

The county clerk stopped me one day on the street. It may be doubted if a gentleman more generous than Judge Joseph Ristine abided in all those parts. With what pleasure I write his name in full.

“I understand you have served in the Marion county clerk’s office,” he said.

“Yes, sir.”

“Deputy?”

“No, employé.”

“Can you make up entries?”

“Perfectly.”

“Well, court is in session. Come over to-morrow.”

“Thank you. I’ll come.”

At the end of the session I paid off all bills against me, bought a new suit of clothes out and in, and had a firm friend besides.

Still the law proper hung fire, and I worried. After a deal of reflection I concluded that want of notoriety



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

was the matter, and I must do something to set the people talking about me. But how—what? There was the rub. Opportunities were not to order. I could only wait for them; and at last one presented itself.

The constitutional convention was held in 1850, with Fountain County entitled to two delegates. Both the political parties put candidates in nomination. Judge Ristine and Mr. M——y, a lawyer, were opposing candidates. As a partisan of the former, I anonymously carded the Democratic paper in his behalf. Mr. M——y answered over his own name. Shrewdly guessing the author of the attack upon him, his denunciation was bitterly personal. Here was the opportunity.

Speaking generally, the people of the county were the original settlers, primitive in habits, large-hearted, Western in spirit. Instead of taking their quarrels into court, they settled them on the spot, resorting to their fists. Giving the lie and getting ready for instant resentment were simultaneous acts; while, if the party affronted hung back, or quailed, no allowances were made for him; he must fight. Especially was this true of lawyers. They might be slow in speech; they might be dishonest; they might lie, in fact, and rob, and still have a clientele; the one thing their respectability could not survive was a reputation for cowardice.

The day the paper appeared with Mr. M——y's reply to my card, there was to be speaking at a little town of the county called Chambersburg. The candidates were to be there and submit their views.

I had a good friend in the sheriff, and, on search, found him in his buggy about to set out for the meeting.

"Tom," I said, "you saw the paper this morning, and what M——y said of me?"

"Yes, what of it?"

"Well, I want that vacant seat. I am going to thrash M——y."

"Jump right in."

The sheriff was a blacksmith and of the fighting set.

"How are you going to manage it?" he asked, on the road. "It will not do for you to disturb the meeting."

"I know that, and you must help me."

"How? I am a conservator, you know."

"Easy enough. What I want you to do is to see a number of the right sort and have M——y put down for the last speech; then, when he quits, have them yell for me. You understand?"

It suited him exactly.

The meeting was in a grove at the edge of the town, with probably three hundred and fifty voters present, county folk almost entirely. One after another the candidates spoke, M——y last in order. As he concluded, a cry went up: "Wallace! Wallace!"

Going forward among the speakers, I responded promptly, beginning with an expression of surprise at being so highly distinguished—I but lately come into the county—a stranger. My next point was a eulogy of Judge Ristine. Hardly had I entered upon it when M——y advanced and protested that I was not a candidate. In his eagerness he laid a hand on my arm. That was justification enough, and I struck him. He staggered back, as luck would have it, into the arms of a justice of the peace, Dempsey Glasscock, a patriarch of Chambersburg, and an eccentric known from the source of the Wabash to its exit into the Ohio.

The meeting went to pieces, of course.

I found myself next on trial before Squire Glasscock, charged with assault and battery.

"Guilty or not guilty," he demanded, sternly.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Guilty," I answered.

The crowd was great, but silence prevailed while the justice made an entry in his docket. Then he stood up and spoke. "Fellow-citizens, I fine the defendant five dollars and cost him."

There was loud protestation.

"But—"

Silence returned.

"But I remit the costs; and here you, Tom"—meaning the sheriff—"take this hat and raise the fine. If any galoot you speak to refuses to 'ante,' he'd better get out of Fountain County."

The fine was paid; then Justice Glasscock again: "Now, you by the door there, roll a buggy up in front of the shop. I'm goin' to have Wallace finish his speech; and you're all invited out to hear him. Come along."

The part of the speech devoted to M——y gave great satisfaction. And from that day I had business. Soon the lawyer with the best docket in the county offered me a partnership.

This may be regarded the experimental period of my life, and I cannot pass it by without recital of a circumstance which derived an interest from subsequent events greatly out of the ordinary. In fact, it is one of my cherished recollections.

Mr. Voorhees came to my office one day.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"Nothing."

"Well, it is the same with me; so I propose we chip in and hire a horse and buggy and go to Danville."

The reference was Danville, Illinois.

"What's going on there?"

"Court is in session—that's all."

We reached the town about dusk and stopped at the

tavern. The bar-room, when we entered it after supper, was all a-squeeze with residents, spiced with parties to suits pending, witnesses, and jurors. The ceiling was low, and we had time to admire the depth and richness of the universal smoke-stain of the wooden walls. To edge in we had to bide our time. Every little while there would be bursts of laughter, and now and then a yell of delight. At last, within the zone of sight, this was what we saw: In front of us a spacious pioneer fireplace all aglow with a fire scientifically built. On the right of the fireplace sat three of the best storytellers of Indiana, Edward A. Hannegan, Dan Mace, and John Pettit. Opposite them, a broad brick hearth intervening, were two strangers to me whom inquiry presently identified as famous lawyers and yarn-spinners of Illinois.

One may travel now from the Kennebec to Puget Sound and never see such a tournament as the five men were holding; only instead of splintering lances they were swapping anecdotes. As to the kind and color of the jokes submitted to the audience, while not always chaste, they never failed to hit home.

The criss-crossing went on till midnight, and for a long time it might not be said whether Illinois or Indiana was ahead. There was one of the contestants, however, who arrested my attention early, partly by his stories, partly by his appearance. Out of the mist of years he comes to me now exactly as he appeared then. His hair was thick, coarse, and defiant; it stood out in every direction. His features were massive, nose long, eyebrows protrusive, mouth large, cheeks hollow, eyes gray and always responsive to the humor. He smiled all the time, but never once did he laugh outright. His hands were large, his arms slender and disproportionately long. His legs were a wonder, particularly when he



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

was in narration; he kept crossing and uncrossing them; sometimes it actually seemed he was trying to tie them into a bow-knot. His dress was more than plain; no part of it fit him. His shirt collar had come from the home laundry innocent of starch. The black cravat about his neck persisted in an ungovernable affinity with his left ear. Altogether I thought him the gauntest, quaintest, and most positively ugly man who had ever attracted me enough to call for study. Still, when he was in speech, my eyes did not quit his face. He held me in unconsciousness. About midnight his competitors were disposed to give in; either their stores were exhausted, or they were tacitly conceding him the crown. From answering them story for story, he gave two or three to their one. At last he took the floor and held it. And looking back, I am now convinced that he frequently invented his replications; which is saying he possessed a marvellous gift of improvisation. Such was Abraham Lincoln. And to be perfectly candid, had one stood at my elbow that night in the old tavern and whispered: "Look at him closely. He will one day be president and the savior of his country," I had laughed at the idea but a little less heartily than I laughed at the man. Afterwards I came to know him better, and then I did not laugh.

XXIV

Made prosecuting attorney—James Wilson—Rival orators—David Brier and Dan Mace—The violin and the interrupted meeting—Removal to Crawfordsville, 1853—*The Fair God*—Scribners' "agent."

NOT wishing to weary one disposed to honor me with an interest in the recital of my life, I shall not linger over the part of it given to the practise of law. Along with many things not admirable, I did some things that were thought smart. I had my triumphs; and it is not a little surprising to me now how readily I bring myself to shove them into the same pigeon-hole devoted to my defeats.

In 1850 the office of prosecuting attorney was of importance, and, being elective, candidates for it were chosen by the political parties at the biennial conventions held for the nomination of congressmen. When well administered it brought the incumbent profit, experience, and extended acquaintance. So, seeking the nomination, I was lucky enough to secure it and be elected—successes which lost nothing of flavor when promptly reported at the castle in Crawfordsville.

On the trial of cases, the main difficulty, as I speedily discovered, was the memory of witnesses. Many of them had a habit of conveniently forgetting in the interval between sessions of the court what they had sworn before the grand jury. The lapses were both fatal and provoking until I hit upon a remedy. It consisted in carefully entering in a journal the testimony as given,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

reading it to the witness in presence of the jury, and then requiring him to affix his signature to the statement. When, next court, the case was called for trial, I took him apart, read to him from the journal, and confronted him with his signature. If he faltered, a gentle reminder of the pains of perjury always sufficed to bring him round to the side of justice.

The work was heavy, but that mattered nothing. It was profitable, and more—it was love's labor not lost. On May 6, 1852, I was able to go to Crawfordsville and be married. If my great happiness over the event so long in expectancy was tinged ever so slightly with exultation, I plead the weakness of human nature in extenuation. The wedding was without objection.

I took my wife to my father's house in Indianapolis, and introduced her there. She delighted my people—none more than the old gentleman himself. I returned then to Covington, the birthplace of our only child, Henry Lane Wallace.

In 1852, my term as prosecuting attorney expiring, I was renominated and again elected.

The competitor given me by the opposition made the race warm and in every way worth the while. Mr. James Wilson lived in Crawfordsville. A graduate of Wabash College, by virtue of great speaking qualities, quick wit, a fine presence and a magnetic nature, he rose rapidly, and repeatedly represented the district in Congress. He was a trifle my senior in age. Professional and political rivalry were not enough ever to disturb our good relations.

In the contest alluded to, the candidates for Congress were, on Wilson's side, Mr. David Brier, of Covington, and on mine, Mr. Dan Mace, of Lafayette. The active canvass was scarcely begun when cholera made its appearance in the district, to the terror of Messrs. Brier

and Mace, and both of them withdrew from the stump, leaving Wilson and myself deputed to finish the campaign for them. Entering heartily into the spirit of the thing, we turned the contention into a joint discussion. By that time we knew the speeches of our principals by heart. The same horse and buggy served us going from appointment to appointment.

Mr. Brier, I can truthfully say, lost nothing through his representative. Large meetings received us, drawn partly by the novelty of the arrangement and partly by the zeal with which the cases were respectively presented. By-and-by, as might have been expected, we grew over-zealous. At Pleasant Hill, a little town in Montgomery County, the good offices of the sheriff were required to keep us from fighting.

Our next appointment was at Alamo, eight miles distant from Pleasant Hill. The ill-feeling had by no means cooled when in the morning we stepped into our one-seated buggy. We rode the entire journey without speaking.

At Alamo the opening of the discussion fell to me. The platform was just across the road in front of a tavern from which, while getting off my speech, I heard the notes of a violin wretchedly played. My competitor began his reply, and was yet in the introduction when I interviewed the fiddler.

"Give me that violin," I said.

He passed it to me.

"Now, throw the door and windows open—there at the front."

Forthwith I struck up the "Arkansas Traveller." The effect was instantaneous. The silver tongue of my antagonist lost its cunning. His hearers, partisans and enemies alike, were smitten with restlessness. Presently they came streaming across to my side of the road,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and when, a little further on, he was driven to an untimely conclusion, I reached a conviction, held ever since, that the power of music is superior to that of eloquence—that the “Arkansas Traveller” in the right key and time, and with the right expression, could have silenced Pericles, or Mirabeau, or any of those accounted of the divine in oratory.

Next day Wilson and I resumed our journey. For four or five miles we said nothing. At last, unable longer to contain himself, he turned to me.

“That was a mean trick you served me yesterday.”

“Do you think so? I am glad it was not lost on you.”

“I ought to knock you out of the buggy, and I’ve a mind to do it.”

“No, don’t. That would breed a tussle and scare our horse. I’ll save the trouble.”

Turning into a fence corner—I was driving at the time—I got out and threw off my coat. Wilson was not less prompt, and we would have been engaged in a moment, but that a rare piece of luck befell us. In our eagerness we had forgotten to hitch the horse, and he, startled, doubtless, by a coat flung upon the ground, shied, and made a break for liberty. Sight of the vehicle vanishing down the road in a cloud of dust, and a hasty thought of our appearance at the next appointment after walking and with countenances in need of repairs, recalled us to our senses, and with the same impulse we set out side by side in full pursuit.

We captured the runaway finally; then, standing on one side of the dashboard, Wilson on the other, both out of breath, I said:

“See here, Jim. You didn’t do the clean thing day before yesterday at Pleasant Hill, and I had a right to get even. I think I am even; so I propose we call the account square, and that we climb in and finish this

business like gentlemen. Brier wouldn't fight for you, nor Mace for me."

"I'm agreed."

We drove back, and recovered our coats, then pushed on to the next appointment.

It is proper, I think, to add that my principal was elected.

For good reasons we moved to Crawfordsville in 1853.

Next year I put the finishing touches on *The Fair God*, and laid it away with downright regret. To what should I turn for pastime next? Where could I look in hopes of finding new friends to take the places of my own creations gone now with my farewells? Still the idea of publication was far from me. In fact, it may be doubted if the suggestion of such a step had entered my mind but for a circumstance which must be given despite the laugh against me.

There came to Crawfordsville a well-dressed, smooth-spoken, literary-looking stranger to whom I could but rise immediately upon his entering my office. His card of introduction—a general one—read, "Mr. ———, New York." The name is out of mind. Down in the left-hand corner of the card was a reference—"For the Scribners."

Scribners' was then one of the comparatively few publishing houses of note in the republic.

The stranger took a seat, and proceeded to speak of the literature of the day, captivating me with his knowledge of books and his acquaintance with the reigning authors. He was on more than mere speaking terms with Bancroft. The stars of Cambridge he had long since ceased to view at a distance through telescopes. He took tea with Longfellow always on going to Boston. Hawthorne's retreat on the house-top at Concord he knew as a canary-bird knows its cage.

And in England the evenings he had passed listening while Dickens read to him from a book then in writing—could he ever forget them? Coming to the point, he said, in the blindest manner, that on account of the sharpness of competition with the other great houses, the Scribners had sent him out in search of new authors. That the country had writers with works of merit not yet offered for publication was well known, and to nobody better than his employers. He had heard that I had a novel in hand; hence his coming to me. He also understood that Mrs. Wallace amused herself with a pen. Possibly she had something, if only a short story or a lyric, which she would be pleased to submit. And as it was part of his duty to read manuscripts, and report upon them, he hoped we would waive scruples and favor him with an inspection of our work.

The flattery was irresistible.

How the gentleman came by his knowledge stirred my wonder; but as my wife did have a book in her desk, I gained her consent, and delivered to him her manuscript and mine, *The Fair God*, with permission to take them to his hotel. Three or four days afterwards he returned, saying, his face aglow, that he had read every word of them; and that I might know his opinion of their merits he was delighted to show me the report he was about to mail to the Scribners.

I read the paper, and nothing could have been more favorable.

"Now," he said, "the house permits me to receive a small compensation for my recommendation, which you of course understand is equivalent to acceptance of the books. The principle is that of a fee for a written opinion in your noble profession. I have given the manuscripts several days and most of my nights. Do you think fifteen dollars an overcharge?"

## LEW WALLACE

I paid the money, and he departed. By-and-by, not hearing from the Scribners, I awoke to the fact of having entertained a confidence man; still I could not help laughing. No neater operation has fallen under my observation—none so insidiously cunning. The fellow might have had a larger fee from me. To have asked more, however, would have been dangerous. His moderation proved him a master in the craft; though he may have addressed himself to others in Crawfordsville, which has always been notoriously literary. As it is, I never see a desk nowadays, whether at home or abroad, without eying it askance—of such are the tombs of dead books.



## XXV

The Republican and other parties in Indiana—Party leaders Lane, Colfax, Allen, Defrees—Contest over slavery—Compromise measures—Stephen A. Douglas and “Squatter Sovereignty”—Thomas A. Hendricks—Joseph E. McDonald—Freedom or slavery—Three specifications.

POLITICS is always in order with fledglings at the bar; and as I plunged into it with the assiduity of an apprentice just out of bond, giving it time and consideration which might have been better bestowed, perhaps I may be forgiven for lingering through a chapter over the questions at that time in fervid agitation, and glancing at the men who in Indiana led the fighting.

Between 1850 and 1854 the Republican party was in a nebulous condition. That is to say, the whole North was alive with *isms*, some purely sentimental, some sounding in morals, each one, however, an army of zealots. Such, to my inexperienced eyes, were the Abolitionists, the Prohibitionists, and the American or Know-nothing party. These, it is to be added, all had in their organizations men of far sight, scheming and struggling to bring about a general coalition without which there could be no effective opposition to the Democratic party.

The first of them in Indiana was Colonel Henry S. Lane. Discerning that the Whig party must give place to a new organization, if, indeed, it were not already dead, he lent himself and all his power of speech and popularity to the coalition. Master of the stops

of eloquence—argument, sarcasm, ridicule, anecdote, pathos—he knew how to attach the willing to a cause, to shame the hesitant, to raise the laugh when it served, and to set men swearing when that was best; withal, however, the great project could not have been successful but for the assistance of John D. Defrees, Schuyler Colfax, and Cyrus Allen.

Mr. Defrees owned and edited the Indianapolis *Journal*, the organ of the Whig party in Indiana. A wiser, shrewder politician there was not in the state.

Mr. Colfax, though very young, was well known throughout Indiana, but more particularly in the northern counties. Of great ability as a writer, he was scarcely inferior to Colonel Lane as a speaker. His newspaper, the South Bend *Free Press*, had a wide circulation.

Mr. Allen's talent lay in party management. The political control south of the national road belonged to him. Though less conspicuous than his associates, his services were indispensable.

There may, possibly, be some of opinion that George W. Julian should be classed with the four; but I do not think so. He eventually swung into line with them; yet, like Garrison and Wendell Phillips, he was from first to last more an enemy of slavery than a Republican. Lane and his colleagues partook of the compromising spirit of Henry Clay. Mr. Julian helped bring his following into the coalition, but while accepting nominations from it after it was a thing accomplished, he was still an abolitionist pure and simple.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Through the whole formative period of the Republican party Oliver P. Morton was a Democrat of the straitest sect. The county in which he resided was an original home of the *isms*—a hot-house in which they all flourished in rankest exuberance. It was impossible to be a Democrat there without being an extreme Democrat, and so extreme was Mr. Morton that he opposed the Wilmot Proviso

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The junto—Lane, Defrees, Colfax, and Allen—weighed the several *isms* carefully, and saw that but one of them had groundwork in principle of breadth for their purpose; whereupon they directed their efforts to the projection of one point—that the extension of slavery must be resisted.

For a while their progress was slow. They had history on their side to begin with; then developments in Congress came to their help, and they made the most of them. The student of the time under consideration cannot afford to overlook those developments; and if only because they were seed generative of the war of 1861, they are worth restatement.

By the Missouri Compromise of 1820 all the territory north of 36° 30' had been *forever* dedicated to freedom. In 1850 the quarrel between the Slave States and the Free States broke out again, the question being upon the admission of California. A second Compromise resulted, one feature of which, supposed to be satisfactory to the South, was an act for the more effectual recovery of fugitive slaves, while by another act, supposedly satisfactory to the North, California became a state with slavery excluded. In 1853 this second Compromise was indorsed as a final settlement of the whole slavery dispute by national conventions of both Whig and Democratic parties.

So in 1852 the status of the great quarrel may be summarized—Congress had exhausted its powers in settlement; the people in conventions had agreed to quit

because it revived the agitation of slavery. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill opened his eyes. In May, 1854, he served as delegate to a Democratic state convention, from which, as it indorsed that act, he voluntarily withdrew. Objecting to the know-nothing plank of the People's party, he took part in the canvass as a Free Democrat, and not until the People's party carried the state in the October election did he openly affiliate with it.

agitating the subject; the sections had shaken hands; leaving the schemers for coalition nothing to stand upon in argument but the talk of Honorables Tom, Dick, and Harry apparently unrepresentative of anybody other than themselves.

But observe now. In that same year (1852) the controversy broke out a third time over a proposition offered in Congress to establish the Territory of Nebraska, and it waxed hotter than ever. Still the advocates of the new party in Indiana derived small comfort from the outburst, for nothing was done with the bill. Still the *isms* clung to their organizations. And thus two years longer. Suddenly the situation changed. In 1854 a bill to organize the Territory of Nebraska being under consideration, a senator, Southern, Democratic, and avowedly pro-slavery, gave notice of a motion that citizens of the several states should be free to take and hold their slaves in any territory. Stephen A. Douglas happened to be chairman of the Senate Committee on Territories. The motion in notice, based as it was on the argument that the Compromise of 1820 was in conflict with the Compromise of 1850, gave Mr. Douglas the opportunity of his life. Already a candidate for presidential honors, and thinking to hush the excitement in prevalence North and South, he advanced a new compromise idea—"to create the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, coupled with a declaration that the Compromise of 1820 was inoperative and void, because inconsistent with the principle of non-intervention by Congress with slavery in the states and territories as recognized by the Compromise measures of 1850." Then, that there might be no misunderstanding, it was further expressly declared that the true intent and meaning of the bill "was not to legislate slavery into any territory or state, and not to exclude it therefrom, but to leave



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the people perfectly free to regulate their domestic institutions in their own way."

This was Mr. Douglas's famous "Squatter Sovereignty."

The effect was like the long roll upon a sleeping regiment; it brought the whole North to its feet. In Indiana the divided elements of opposition made haste to get together and organize. In July, 1854, they assembled in state convention, and launched the "People's Party." Temperance, Prohibition, Know-nothingism, Abolition were all kindly remembered in the platform; at the same time *the* flag around which they rallied was that of opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska bill, or, in plainer terms, resistance to the extension of slavery. The Missouri Compromise—all the compromises, in fact—were sponged out. At last the South had shown its hand, and the coalition was accomplished.

The foregoing will be familiar to the gray-beards who took part in the struggle which ensued, and ended ten years afterwards in a battle-field down in old Virginia. I concede it natural that such of them as give the recital attention may shrug their shoulders with impatience; nevertheless, it is to be hoped they will permit me to remind them of the vast majority grown up since, some of whom I am aiming to interest not merely in the struggle itself, but in a picture of the situation confronting me at that time in my youth when I was about to make my first essay in politics. These will see, I am sure, that the drawing now needs a few touches to help them to an understanding of the other party to the fight. I confine myself still to Indiana, for as yet I did not presume to think of affecting by my personal effort anything beyond its limits—hardly, in fact, beyond my county.

The state had been reliably Democratic—that I think may be safely said. It also had a junto composed of four gentlemen not a whit less able than the four serving the opposition.

Jesse D. Bright was United States Senator, a position vastly more dazzling then than now. He was neither orator nor writer; yet he had qualities which amply compensated for those deficiencies, for under his management the party was never so nearly reduced to individual possession. As Adam was the first man, Mr. Bright was the first political “boss.” The loaves and crumbs of national patronage due Indiana all came to his basket, and he distributed them, and in the matter of candidacies his was the controlling voice.

Next in influence was Thomas A. Hendricks. In point of popularity, indeed, he even surpassed Mr. Bright, to whom he wisely left the bestowal of patronage. He knew the mantle of control must fall to him sooner or later, since to political shrewdness, purity of character, and high social qualities, he added a profound knowledge of the general make-up of the party, and an extraordinary power of speech, the peculiarity of which was a faculty of putting things to the satisfaction of his audiences without actually committing himself.

Next to Mr. Hendricks stood Joseph E. McDonald, who, while not an orator, was often successful as any orator. His hearers had never to look at one another in doubt of his views or of his conscientiousness.

Last of the four, Ashbel P. Willard was a dashing Prince Rupert sort of leader who could speak the Democratic mind more to the approval of his party than either Mr. Bright, Mr. Hendricks, or Mr. McDonald.

To these gentlemen politics seemed a subject of co-partnership. They never quarrelled with one another.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

If at times they failed appearance in state conventions, they were always apparent in the platform. Did one put his face close to the lines, and look sharply between them, they could all be seen as in the haze of a background. They legislated for the Democracy as Mahomet legislated for his Faithful, and, like him, they had their Alis, Omars, and Khalids.

Now, in that day such as were or hoped to be entities of note in politics—all the great leaders, in fact, whether of this party or that—were specialists of the stump; so, having decided on a trial of my fortune in the uncertain game, I thought to follow the usage, and, in accordance with a habit acquired at the bar, set to preparing a brief covering the main questions at issue in the campaign.

I remember the surprise with which a conviction struck me that the Democratic party was on the defensive. What! The Democracy, rock-ribbed, all-conquering, the mighty Micromégas<sup>1</sup> of American politics, reduced to defence! Our leaders had promised us an easy time of long duration, now that its old Whig enemy had been at last done to death. Nevertheless, I shivered, not being able to hide it from myself while at my brief that the turn of every point in it had to be a dodge, a denial, a deprecation, or a begging the question.

In truth the *isms*, despised and unassimilated though they were, had fighting force in quantity much greater than we were willing to allow them, and in their midst the old party was like a whale assailed at the same time by many boats harpooning it from every direction; the best it could do was to fluke the water and blow.

<sup>1</sup> Voltaire has a satirical story of an inhabitant of Sirius, a Mr. Micromégas, who, to be in ratio proportionate to the bulk of his native planet, was one hundred and twenty thousand feet high.

The weapon the multiplied enemy all used in common, and with the greatest effect was that the Democracy had passed from defending the accursed institution of slavery, and now meant, as a final wickedness, to carry and plant it in the territories. For *that* they had treacherously repealed the Compromises of 1820 and 1850. For *that* they had invented Mr. Douglas's latest villany, "Squatter Sovereignty," and inaugurated a civil war in Kansas.

This, to say the least, had the flash, if not the cutting edge of a ground sword, and called for skilful trimming and dancing down the wind by the others; even our oldest and longest in the business, Oliver P. Morton, fled before it, and as a Free Democrat went over to the help of the People's Party; and we denounced him as a traitor, and pursued him so rancorously that we actually hastened the development of his greatness.

The issue thus forced by the opposition was, in grave distinctness, Freedom or Slavery; so when I sat pondering my brief, I found myself compelled to consider three specifications summarized somewhat as follows:

1. The South claims the right of a master to go with his slaves into a territory, and hold them there. Should the claim be conceded, every new state must necessarily become a slave state.
2. The South having at last a fugitive-slave law operative throughout the North, every man in the North is liable to be turned into a slave-hunter.
3. In the nature of things Freedom and Slavery cannot be coexistent, and if Freedom is lost the Democratic party is responsible.

These were serious counts in the most serious indictment that had ever been returned against the Democracy, and if I persisted in the canvass proposed, they



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

had to be studied to a conclusion. They made a full basket of hard nuts for cracking, and I in the time of my first teeth as a politician. I had visions of Colonel Lane and Mr. Colfax and the old party under their hands a groaning clinic. I saw the colonel in mid-speech, his arms flying like the sails of a windmill in Holland. Not even Wendell Phillips could turn the theme to greater advantage, the point of skill being to keep its dark sides in constant view.

Should I back out? It was not too late. No, that looked cowardly. Then I thought of going slow and waiting to hear the leaders, Hendricks, McDonald, and Willard. To borrow their ideas was usual and always safe. I flattered myself, too, unctuously for that, and my vanity rebelled at playing second fiddle to their key-note. What then?

I would go through the specifications alone. I would go through them, and let my conscience have a hearing in the matter. No man could speak well if not in earnest, and no man could be in earnest without believing in the righteousness of his cause.

First, then, were the presentments true?

After long reflection I concluded they were true. The manly thing for me, then, was to do as Morton had done. By that time I had unearthed the blocks over which he had stumbled. And frankly, but for the prejudice I had formed against the abolitionists, I would have sided with Mr. Julian. To despise half-way houses was a habit with me.

As to the first of the specifications, I could not bring myself to defend the institution of slavery.

With respect to the second, my sympathies would side with the fugitive against his master. In all nature there was nothing more natural than the yearning for freedom. I saw him, look where I pleased, a hunted

creature groping blindly along seeking the betterments he had heard of as in store for him up somewhere under the north star.

These were powerful influences, but scarcely less powerful was the help they had from the other side. That is to say, I had grown restive under the dominion of the Southern leaders. They were arrogant, selfish, and inconsiderate of the feelings as well as interests of the party North. I resented the epithet "Mudsills," not to mention the boast of the Georgian bully about calling the roll of his slaves on Bunker Hill. In these considerations there were quick appeals to my manhood and my pride of section; heavy as they were, however, they failed to outweigh the prejudice against the abolitionists. *They* were fanatics and wild men; and, worse, while enemies of slavery, they were also conspirators against the Union. The indecency of Toombs, the swashbuckler, was more than palliated by Garrison, to whom the Constitution was "a covenant with hell." Garrison was a disunionist; Toombs a slaveholder made mad by threats against his property. Garrison was a fanatic and Toombs a fool, and it was hard saying which was the more dangerous, though in my feeling African slavery was more tolerable than treason. I give all this to show the worry I underwent, and in excuse of the pottering and compass-boxing that filled the days and nights during which I strove hard and honestly to find a position in ease of my conscience.

While trying one day to get through the shell to the kernel of the third specification, the idea presented itself interrogatively, Was the South responsible for slavery? And after the rereading of Bancroft, I answered the question—Not more than an unborn child is responsible for the sin of its parent. I pursued the inquiry, and it brought me presently to the clause in

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the national Constitution providing for the return of fugitives, meaning fugitive slaves, which, interpreted at length, was a recognition of slavery and indirectly its nationalization as an institution.

A light broke in upon me, and I saw what seemed the true position to be taken by the Democracy; which was, not to preach maintenance of the law favoring slavery, for that would be favoring the institution, but simply a loyal observance of the law while the law continued in force.<sup>1</sup> Then the Democracy would be defending itself upon the ground of legal right in the owner of a slave, while the opposition would be assailing the Democracy upon the less tangible ground of natural right in the slave. In other words, if the abolitionists hated slavery more than they loved the Union, there were myriads of people open to appeal who loved the Union more than they hated slavery.

The brief when finished committed me to insistence upon observance of the laws as a first duty. Their propriety might be questioned—their impropriety might be agitated—they were always subject to repeal—but while they endured, social good and the life of the republic required every citizen to submit to them. A little later Chief-Justice Taney handed down the famous opinion in the Dred Scott case, stating what the law was—the decision went no further—then the correctness of my position had the approval of my conscience, leaving me free to deprecate slavery everywhere as earnestly as any abolitionist in the land.

Finally, as I could not see why slavery being a domestic institution might not be left to the decision of the people of a territory as well as to the people of a state, I became a Douglas Democrat.

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that the abolitionists never proposed to amend the Constitution by striking out the obnoxious fugitive-slave clause.



## XXVI

The prospect of civil war—Preparations—Study of tactics—Organization of Montgomery Guards—Zouaves—Disapproved by “solid citizens”—Record of company—All commissioned officers.

THAT Mr. Douglas's compromise in substitution of that of 1850 was a failure grew clearer as the days advanced. If I looked at the Republican party, it seemed completely abolitionized; if at the Democratic party, it showed two factions embittered to the fighting-point, and headed, respectively, by Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Douglas; if at the sections, it became all too palpable that the line of separation between them had turned into a ditch growing deeper every day, with multitudes organizing on either side wanting only arms to be armies. In short, it was impossible for me not to see that the great quarrel had been aggravated far beyond peaceable settlement—that compromises were worn-out expedients—that war was inevitable. And this conviction was supplemented by another—I made sure that the abolitionists would in some way precipitate the war, possibly by striking the first blow. At length the only uncertainty I had was as to when the overt act would be committed.

Up to this conclusion all my thoughts about war had been of hostilities with some foreign power—England or France—most likely France, for Louis Napoleon was being hard put in those days to keep the French people amused. Such a clash would have had a welcome from me; but this one now in promise, section against section,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

state against state, Indiana against Kentucky, filled me with unaffected horror. The more so because when it came everybody would have to take a side. Which in that dark day should I choose? The grip of the grim necessity would be upon me, along with all the rest. And thereupon I grouped all the interests together—Freedom, Slavery, Individual Rights, Popular Government—and tried to weigh them dispassionately.

There was immense worry to me while the subject was in the scales; but at last it became sunlight clear that the one thing in the involvement worth all the rest, because it was the one thing upon which all the rest depended, was the union of states. The idea separated itself from everything else, especially from everything in the nature of mere political appeal. It alone had the air of a genuine principle of action. My troubles disappeared with its coming. I might be nothing in the struggle, nevertheless, I resolved to hold myself in readiness to go with the side proposing to uphold the integrity of the Union—this without regard for section or party.

The reader is besought not to think from what is here set down that I am pluming myself upon any superior foresight, much less the possession of prophetic powers. The conclusions reached were reached through application of a very old process—that, namely, by which we say four when two is added to two. There were thousands and thousands of people much more amply minded than I who were studying for their soul's worth along the same lines. It is true they did not separate the same principle of action, and resolve to stay with it; they could not all see alike, and the differences of motive were many and mighty; still they did reflect far enough forward to make sure of the occurrence of war, and if, knowing the characteristics of

those bound to be parties to it, they were of opinion, and so said, that the war would be long and great, the coincidences as I see them, were not all remarkable, or at least not more so than the agreement of a jury.

At the same time the opinion had effects upon me somewhat personal. I not only thought the conflict would be long and great, but that it would also be crowded with opportunities for distinction not in the least inconsistent with patriotism. In other words, I could see no prohibition against my attaining respectable rank—a captaincy, at least. The want of officers would be pressing, and at no time more pressing than in the beginning, because of the amazing dearth of men in civil life possessed of practical military experience. I had only to demonstrate a fitness for the employment. And straightway the love of military life, never wholly dead in me, revived with the force of a passion; so the resolve upon a principle led to a resolve to get ready to be a useful servant to it while yet the need was on the road coming.

Then my term in Mexico, though unmarked by a battle, showed itself of advantage to me. The arms of service were the same as in the former war—infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineering—and I saw that while acquainting myself with all of them theoretically, it would be best for me to choose one for a specialty, and try to excel in it. Of course, being shut out of West Point, there was nothing for me but resort to the self-educating process to which, fortunately, I had been so accustomed.

As a first step, I made a list of the text-books in use at the academy. Some of them are yet on a shelf in my library, a few having escaped—larcenously, or as presents. Thus provided, I began giving my nights to the study, and it proved another delightful pastime.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Presently it appeared that the arm of most reliance in battle, if not in field operations generally, was the infantry. It was also plain that, being the most numerous, promotions from it must be most frequent. The prevailing argument in favor of its adoption, however, was the possibility of my practising the instructions in the books without going away from home.

I proceeded next to organize a military company.

Crawfordsville had its full share of young men, just the material wanted. Sixty-five of them entered into the spirit of the project, organized, and became the Montgomery Guards. The state furnished us arms and equipments; armory, tents, uniforms, and band were all of our own provision. This was in the summer of 1856. We addressed ourselves to Hardee's *Infantry Tactics* for instruction. The proficiency reached was extraordinary, and it brought us notoriety more than we had dreamed of. Wabash College contributed a quota of enthusiasts. A magazine containing an article descriptive of the Algerian Zouaves of France fell into my hands about that time, and I reduced what was there reported to a system, including the bayonet exercises. The book, subsequently enlarged to two volumes and copiously illustrated with diagrams of manoeuvres, is still in my possession. The company were so pleased with the drill they bought a Zouave outfit; whereupon emulation was excited until afterwhile there were companies enough for state encampments, which were in every instance preceded by my formal challenge to competitive drill, but always without takers.

The Zouaves—by that description my company became known abroad—received, I am sorry to say, little sympathy and no material support from our fellow-townsmen. Our parades brought the population to the streets without recommending us to the "solid citizens,"



who, when the gay spectacles disappeared, denounced them as foolishness, and a wicked waste of time and money. Some of them did their utmost to effect a disruption; but I managed to keep the enthusiasm alive. "The old fellows don't know what they are talking about. Stick to this, boys; master all its details. A big war is making ready, and when it comes these carpers will be ashamed of themselves and proud of you. Only stick to the colors, and in that day you will have at command positions to satisfy you for all you are now doing. Commissions will then come hunting you." Such was my argument.

This practice, one may be sure, was expensive; still it was what I wanted, being practical education. It is to be said, however, that I made the mistake usual with amateur officers, the mistake of thinking a knowledge of company and battalion drills, and of sentinel duty, and the ordinary ceremonies, such as guard-mounting, dress-parades, reviews, and inspections the whole of needful attainment. It had been different probably had my vanity permitted me to think of a rank above a captaincy. In other words, I myself failed fully to comprehend the opportunities which I had been so freely promising the bright young fellows of my company.

Nevertheless, the employment more than kept me agreeably employed; it made me watchful of events, then of almost daily occurrence, and helped me to a sharper interpretation of them. The troubles in Kansas, for instance, were generally regarded by those around me as signifying little more than politics unusually lurid on account of a resort to bludgeons, pistols, and long-range rifles; in my view they were the first meeting of opposing forces bent on war. In Atchison and his "Border Ruffians," I saw the South; in Greeley and Beecher, and their hymn-book contributors,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I saw the North. "It is a bad business," I went on saying to my young soldiers, "a very bad business, but also a warning to us to stick to our work."

This employment was not a thing of times and seasons; the practice and study were carried on persistently through the years down to 1861. The *personnel* of my company changed, of course—our young men are, as a rule, birds of passage—howbeit the ranks recruited and stayed full without any perceptible flagging of interest. Nor did I regard the hours thus devoted as lost. They were snatched mostly from night. And as to days of parade, visitation, and encampment, my conscience disposed of them much as the venerable hunter, Rip Van Winkle, disposed of his drinks—they were not counted.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At the breaking out of the Rebellion in the spring of 1861, there were sixty-four members of the Montgomery Guards, of whom all entered the Union army but two, and they wanted to enlist, but as they had dependent families I advised against it. Nearly all of them became officers, their commissions ranging from major-general to second lieutenant.

## XXVII

The state Democratic convention—Stephen A. Douglas—Pledges Indiana to support Buchanan and the South—I protest—Elected State Senator—Bill for restraining divorce—Bill for choosing United States Senators by General Assembly—The Douglas and Lincoln debate—First doubts as to Democracy.

THE convention of January 8, 1856, was probably the largest that had ever been held by the Democracy of Indiana. I had the honor to represent my county as a delegate to it. As an introduction to the prevailing modes of party, those of relation to nominations and the construction of platforms—or, more simply, as a political experience—I should regret to be asked to pass that convention.

It was positively clear to me that Mr. Douglas had the support of a majority of the party in Indiana; yet in caucusing, the evening before the meeting, the old leaders to a man were discovered working for Mr. Buchanan. And this time they were all there—Senator Bright, Judge Pettit, United States Marshal Robinson, Judge Hughes, Governor Willard, Mr. McDonald, Mr. Hendricks—the whole array, in fact. They were the sages of the party, heroes of many a fight—victorious Moses who held the wands which, smiting the rock of patronage, set the offices to flowing. And sure enough, in the morning of the meeting, with characteristic calmness and self-possession, coolly as the owner of a carriage would jump into the seat and grasp the reins to move on whip in hand, they assumed the control.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Judge Pettit, as permanent chairman, "fixed" the committee on resolutions solidly for Mr. Buchanan.

The ignorement of the Douglas element was indecent. Was there no one brave enough to resist the usurpation? What if Mr. Douglas's friends were a minority? There was moral advantage in a vigorous fight. From man to man of notoriety I ran begging them to prepare a resolution in behalf of our leader, and have it ready for introduction instantly that the committee reported. None would undertake the business; it was too like insurgency. Then, as the last resort, I myself wrote an amendment, and at a caucus of the Douglas delegates held during the noon adjournment it was adopted. Mr. Holman, afterwards the Great Objector, agreed to present the plank if the committee reported as we all believed it would.

The convention reassembled, a denser jam on the floor than in the morning. In good time the committee on resolutions were ready. While the chairman was reading their report, the silence might have been heard. Mr. Buchanan was indorsed and the state pledged to him. The crisis was come. Where was Mr. Holman? A hundred voices called him. No answer. His courage had failed. Judge Pettit was putting the question upon adoption, and with us it was then or never. Climbing a desk, I succeeded in getting recognition, and, moving an amendment, sent up a copy of my resolution for reading by the secretary. Pettit was declaring it out of order, when such a tempest broke loose as I had never heard in a deliberative body. The yelling seemed to shake the solid pillars of the chamber. It shore the chairman's words from his lips squarely as if cut by scissors. He tried to be heard; so did I. In vain. The roar continued. Suddenly I was seized, passed bodily overhead, and planted on the secretary's desk

face to face with the presiding officer. His arms were rising and falling like a wood-chopper's. His countenance was purple with rage. My fear was that apoplexy would strike him. The tumult swept on and on. Occasionally, "Question," "Question," could be distinguished. At last, from sheer exhaustion, the chairman gave in, and permitted me to speak in support of my amendment, and, when put to vote, it was carried.

I scarcely remember ever being so happy. The exultation went to bed with me at night. The perfected sweetness of the victory was that I had beaten the old stagers of the party. In the morning I would wake up famous.

But, alas! Or, as the Spaniards would say, "*Ay de mi!*" I carried the matutinal paper to simmer over at breakfast. The proceedings of the convention claimed attention first. I looked for my resolution. What!—no—yes, somebody had tinkered with it. That which had been a committal to Mr. Douglas, emphatic enough to have made the "Little Giant" blithesome as a bridegroom, was now a song of praise for Mr. Buchanan. My flesh crawled. Good Heavens! What would my *confrères* of the convention say of me? Who was he that had not scrupled at the forgery? I ran over the list of the demi-gods whom I knew to have been present during the great conference, and settled on one really the brightest, boldest, most unscrupulous of them all. He is dead now, and it were wrong to disturb his ghost. Yet I have been wiser ever since, and always look at old manipulators in conventions watchfully. They have a dangerous habit of carrying sleevefuls of trump-cards in wait for the last play.

However, the fight I had made was not entirely unrewarded. An extended notoriety had been gained, and the Democracy of my county gave earnest of their



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

appreciation by nominating me for state senator, and then electing me.

At the organization of the senate in the winter of 1857 I took seat as of that body. There was a special session the year following, and a regular biennial session in 1859, through all which my services extended.

An old man *can* sit in judgment upon his youth. He has only to drop his egoism, and regard the young man to be passed upon as a stranger. Speaking in that philosophic spirit, I cannot be proud of my career as a law-maker. The great error was in fancying myself elected, not to engage seriously in legislative business, but to look after and take care of the Democratic party. An election of a successor to United States Senator Jesse D. Bright fell to us with a Democratic majority in the Lower House and a Republican majority in the Senate. Here, as every reader remembering the status of feeling between the North and South at that time can understand, was ample occasion for bitterness and sharp practices. I pass the details, calling to mind reproachfully the number of hours I spent with my colleagues of the Jacksonian faith warming my heels in the lobby. Bolting is a thing to be ashamed of—as I see it now. Better accept defeat. Appeal to the people is the only real remedy under the American system of government.

There were times, however, in which I tried my hand at serious legislation. Two instances in especial come to mind.

The first had to do with divorces. Some of the causes recited in the existing law were trivial, unchristian, and socially detrimental. The shameful features were the provision for notice of the commencement of the suit, than which nothing could have been more in aid of fraud, and the brevity of residence required for

a party plaintiff. As a consequence of the abuses practised the state was odious throughout the Union. My bill for reform unfortunately proved too radical for the committee to which it was referred, and they reported it back with modifications which I could not accept. The worst of the affair, however, was that I and others working for the change became convinced that Congress alone could accomplish what we sought. State lines are sometimes deplorably inconvenient.

The second instance can be given by quoting the title of a bill introduced by me in the session of 1859. "Senate Bill, No. 2. An Act to regulate the choosing of United States Senators by the General Assembly, specifying the time, place, and mode of the choosing, providing for the designation of such Senators by the people, and prescribing the duties of certain officers in connection with such designation and choosing." In other words, far back as 1859 I proposed giving the people the right to choose their United States Senators. The difficulty was I was too far ahead of public opinion.

The idea of such a reference was brought to me rather singularly. It was in the summer of 1858. The contest for the national Senatorship in Illinois was in progress. Upon the challenge of Abraham Lincoln a joint debate had been arranged between that gentleman and Stephen A. Douglas. Three of the seven meetings agreed upon had taken place; and it is not saying too much, I think, that the people North and South were, in a sense, listening, so intense was the feeling excited. The personality of the party challenged had much to do with that feeling; yet there was a deeper cause—the subject of discussion.

To me Mr. Douglas was the first of living orators. What a magnificent spectacle he had presented standing day after day alone in the Senate, flinging answers,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

now to the abolitionists, now to the slave-holders, now to Mr. Seward, now to the arch-conspirator, Jefferson Davis! At such times he was in my eyes a lion baited by foxes and jackals. That Mr. Lincoln—gaunt, awkward, comic Lincoln whom I had seen in the bar-room of the old tavern at Danville—could get the better of him in debate was ludicrous as a mot of the uncouth clown himself. Yet if he could not get the better of my “Little Giant,” he could at least draw him fully out upon all the phases of the mighty clash about Slavery and the Extension of Slavery.

In the afternoon of the day of the fourth meeting of the disputants, I found myself in Charleston, Illinois, lost in a crowd assembled in a grove near that interesting little city. The platform for the speakers reminded me of an island barely visible in a restless sea—so great was the gathering. By good management I succeeded in getting standing-room close up in front of the platform.

Mr. Douglas was first to appear. It had not been my good-fortune to have had sight of him before; now I recognized him by his pictures, a short man with a deep chest, Websterian head, and a countenance somewhat lowering. He seemed worried, and took seat with the air of one too closely occupied with thoughts to notice or care for surroundings. It struck me, also, that he was niggardly in his recognition of friends.

Presently there was a commotion in the crowd and a general looking that way, and Mr. Lincoln mounted the steps. He paused on the platform, and took a look over the crowd and into the countenances near by, and there was a smile on his lips and a whole world of kindness in his eyes. The thin neck craned out over his sweat-wilted shirt collar while he bowed to acquaintances. Mr. Douglas’s outer suit had come from an ac-



complished tailor; Mr. Lincoln's spoke of a slop-shop. The multitude impressed me as the most undemonstrative of all I had ever seen on a political occasion. Every man of them, however, was palpitating with an anxiety too great for noise. So, I fancy, men must behave when they are spectators of a duel to the death.

At Ottawa, Mr. Douglas had presented a number of questions to Mr. Lincoln, which that gentleman answered at the Freeport meeting and countered by interrogatories on his side. It resulted that when the two came to Charleston the issues between them were all joined.

When time was called—if I may use the expression—Mr. Lincoln arose, straightening himself as well as he could. But for the benignant eyes, a more unattractive man I had never seen thus the centre of regard by so many people. His voice was clear without being strong. He was easy and perfectly self-possessed. The great audience received him in utter silence, and the July sun beat mercilessly upon his bare head.

Now, not having been blessed with a vision of the events to come, which were to set this uncouth person in a niche high up alongside Washington, leaving it debatable which of the two is greatest, I confess I inwardly laughed at him; only the laugh was quite as much at the political manager who had led him out against Mr. Douglas. Nevertheless, I gave him attention. Ten minutes—I quit laughing. He was getting hold of me. The pleasantry, the sincerity, the confidence, the amazingly original way of putting things, and the simple, unrestrained manner withal, were doing their perfect work; and then and there I dropped an old theory, that to be a speaker one must needs be graceful and handsome. Twenty minutes—I was listening breathlessly, and with a scarcely defined fear.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I turned from him to Mr. Douglas frequently, wondering if the latter could indeed be so superior to this enemy as to answer and overcome him. Thirty minutes—the house divided against itself was looming up more than a figure of speech. My God, could it be prophetic! An hour—the limit of the speech. Mr. Lincoln took his seat. How many souls sat down with him—that is, how many of the unbelieving like myself were converted to his thinking—I could not know; yet of one thing I was assured—it was in somebody's intention to do the old government to death, and slavery was to be the excuse for the crime. Nor could I get from under a conviction that Mr. Lincoln's speech was a defence of Freedom.

Then Mr. Douglas arose. As his stumpy figure appeared, provoking comparison with his tall rival, I was amused thinking, what if in an alignment of company they should be required to dress right or left upon each other? He had an hour and a half for reply. Despite my predilections, I was driven shortly to acknowledge that the prepossession did not belong to him. His face was darkened by a deepening scowl, and he was angry; and in a situation like his anger is always an admission in the other party's favor. He spoke so gutturally, also, that it was difficult to understand him. Still he was my Gamaliel. From him I had my politics. He failed to draw me like his competitor; he had no magnetism; he was a mind all logic; at the same time, be it said in truth, Stephen A. Douglas could not make a poor speech. I listened almost prayerfully. Whereas Mr. Lincoln had been the fine flower of courtesy, Mr. Douglas made no return in kind. What could be the matter? Afterwards I knew. He was handicapped by a continuous terror lest he should say something that would lose him the support of the South in the vastly more

## LEW WALLACE

important convention then shortly to be held at Charleston, South Carolina. I did not stay to hear him through, but left carrying with me a damaging contrast—while Mr. Lincoln had been the advocate of Freedom, Mr. Douglas, with all his genius for discussion, had not been able to smother the fact that he was indirectly and speciously acknowledging all the South claimed for slavery.

So Lincoln came into my view a second time.

And so, that day in Charleston, I discerned what all of opportunity the voting masses of the country could have to see and hear the men chosen by their respective parties for United States Senators, and choose between them. Accordingly, my scheme of legislation was to give conventions authority to nominate without disturbing the right of the legislature to elect. For this no change of Constitution was required; neither had I a doubt that the legislature would be governed by the action of the convention. The invariable loyalty of electoral colleges, invested as they are with the utmost freedom, appeared to me precisely in point.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XXVIII

The political situation—Kansas—Democratic secret conference in Indianapolis—Sympathy with the South—I leave the meeting—The reconciliation with Morton—Offer services if needed—Sumter fired on—Telegram from Morton—April 13, 1861—In court at Frankfort—Ride to Colfax on horseback—Thence to Indianapolis by train.

THE political situation in the country kept steadily going from bad to worse. Aside from the war in Kansas, there were mysterious commercial conventions in the South ably manipulated by well-known fire-eaters; Brooks invaded the Senate chamber and assaulted Sumner; arms were going South from the national armories continually and without interruption; the navigation of the lower Mississippi was forcibly shut against Northern traffic—all incidents to me more than mere portents of coming hostilities. Yet, with singular perversity, I persisted in the belief that the abolitionists would precipitate the conflict. What other interpretation could be given old John Brown's attempt upon Virginia? If his backers, the Beechers and Garri-sons, imagined that, with eighteen men all told, he could wipe the American soil clean of slavery, they and he were crazy; but they were not crazy—I speak particularly of the backers—and hence could only mean the quick inauguration of war.

The time came, however, when it was given me to see better.

One day, in the winter of 1860, I received a note inviting me to a meeting of Democrats of Indiana to

be held at room fourteen of the Palmer House in Indianapolis.

My train was late, and on arrival I hurried to the hotel and room, the latter famous in Democratic history as the place in which party policies had been decided and slates made up. It was full to crowding. The chairman was stating the object of the meeting when I looked in. Many of the elders of the party were there balancing their chins on heavy canes. With them was a shoal of ambitious younger men of whom I might have sat for a type. Edging modestly along a wall, I presently commanded a view of the assemblage. The importance of the subject under consideration was of easy discernment. For a while I listened to the gentleman speaking incredulously, scarcely believing my ears. He was asking quietly, but in so many words, what the Democracy of Indiana should do in the event of war between the sections North and South. And he argued cautiously, saying the state was Democratic and ought to be in sympathy with the brethren South to whom the recent election of Abe Lincoln had been an insult justifying speedy resentment. Then followed a statement that startled me. If Lincoln's inauguration took place in March, there was not power anywhere, he said, to save the Union. He did not say directly that the South would secede or that it would begin hostilities—for that he was too careful—but spoke of such contingencies as so certain that it were wisdom if the party in Indiana took action upon them as upon foregone facts.

The speakers who followed the venerable chairman were some of them much more outspoken. They boldly avowed that war was determined upon, and that there was but one consistent course for the Democracy of Indiana—namely, to go with the South. Doubtless, there were men present to whom the idea of seconding



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the proposed treason was shocking; nevertheless, not a mouth opened in protest or denial. Then I as good as knew that off somewhere, probably in Charleston, South Carolina, there was a headquarters of secession at that moment, and that those leading in the meeting in progress were in communication with the traitors acting in their behalf. If so, my apologies were due the abolitionists.

I did not stay the conference through. While standing on the curb by the sign-post of the hotel thinking of the revelation so suddenly imparted, and with much certainty, some one tapped me on the shoulder. It was Judge W——k, the chairman, whom I had known since boyhood. I do not pretend to do more than give the substance of the exchange that ensued:

"I saw you leave the room," the judge said; "I suppose it was because you had not a seat. Come back, and I will see to that."

"Why do you want me there?" I asked.

He hesitated, seeing, likely, that he might be pushed to a plainer *exposé*.

"Well," he said, "you know that war is imminent. Plagued and provoked beyond endurance, the South is driven to fight!"

"That's tolerably plain."

And he went on: "Because the South is right, and its cause just, Indiana ought to stand with it."

My reply was with some irritation.

"Let us, for the argument, admit what you say—that the South has just cause; of what has Indiana to complain?"

"But we are Democrats and they are Democrats," he said, and then smirched me with a mess of flattery. "We want you particularly—you are the only Democrat in the state with any military practice."

He was offering me leadership.

"Judge," I said, "I have known you a long time, and will respect your age. This is my native state. I will not leave it to serve the South. Down the street yonder is the old cemetery, and my father lies there going to dust. If I fight, I tell you, it shall be for his bones. In so much I am an Indian. I will not go back to the room with you."

We separated.

It was upon me then—and I saw it ever so plainly—not merely to choose a side in the war the South was ushering in, but to go further, and intrust somebody else with knowledge of the choice. In crossing the street I thought of Governor Morton, and felt that now I owed him an apology. He had forsaken the Democratic party early, and for two years he and I had not spoken.

The governor, when I went into his office, was sitting at the farther end under a window writing. He came forward at sight of me, and took my hand cordially. Doubtless he remembered, as did I, that we had been school-boys together. Declining his invitation to sit, I began at once.

"Governor, I owe you an apology for what I have been saying of you politically. You were right in quitting the Democratic party. Now I, too, will quit it."

He called me familiarly: "Well, Lew, this does not astonish me. Never mind what you have been saying about me. Tell me what has happened—something serious, I know."

"Yes, I now know that war is certain, and soon, and that the South will make it."

"How do you know it?"

Carefully withholding the names of any of the men I had seen at the meeting in room fourteen, I told the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

governor then what had taken place and been said; after which I concluded, saying: "If these leaders are right, governor, and the South does attempt forcible secession, I tender you my services in advance. You may command me absolutely."

He took my hand again, his eyes humid.

"You could not go with the South," he said, "or with any treasonable organization here at home. That is not in your blood. I tell you, also in advance, if the South goes to the extreme of war, or threatens it by any overt act, I will send for you first man."

Thereupon I thanked him, and took my leave.

Somewhat late in the afternoon of April 13th I was addressing a jury in the Clinton County Circuit Court when the telegraph operator of the town<sup>1</sup> came into the court-room, and told the judge he had a telegram for me. The judge spoke to me, and the sheriff put into my hand a message in words very nearly these:

"Sumter has been fired on. Come immediately.

"OLIVER P. MORTON."

I gave the telegram to the judge to read, and, with his permission, excused myself to the jury, leaving the case to my law partner.

Now, April 13th was Saturday, and to get to Indianapolis that night—there being no Sunday train—it was necessary for me to take a horse, and ride on the run to a station called Colfax, ten miles away. As I went plunging through the mud, there was time to think of what was ahead of the country as well as myself. Not of the right or wrong of the great duel; reflection upon that subject had been closed with me

<sup>1</sup> Frankfort, Clinton County, Indiana.

## LEW WALLACE

times and times since the secret meeting of Democrats in Indianapolis. But there were other points scarcely less interesting. The combination of pride, courage, and endurance had always made wars long and bloody, and it was far from me to deny those qualities to men of the South. So, as it appeared to me, the struggle would at least last until the wayward section was utterly exhausted. When that would be, who could say? Then as to proportions—it was easy seeing how they depended upon the success of the conspirators in uniting their states. In the general obscurity there was one thing plain to me, and it was that the Union would be a cause on one side, and secession a cause on the other—secession for the sake of slavery. In other words, I was not going to Indianapolis to engage in old arguments; my mind was made up—I was going simply to become a soldier of the Union. It will be admitted, I think, that the occasion was one to excite excitement.



## XXIX

Interview with Morton at state-house—Appointed adjutant-general—President's call for seventy-five thousand men—State co-operates—Raises quota—Arrival in Indianapolis—Camp Morton—Eleventh regiment—Zouaves—Barracks.

ABOUT seven o'clock Sunday morning I called at the governor's residence in Indianapolis, intending to excuse myself for disturbing him so early. A servant told me he had breakfasted and gone to his office. Knowing the office to be in the state-house—my father had occupied it during his incumbency—I hurried thither.

There was preliminary conversation, after which I told the governor of my readiness for any duty he might think me fit. The colloquy that ensued is still fresh in my memory.

"The firing on Sumter," the governor said, "is the overt act I have been expecting for some days. Mr. Lincoln has now no resort except to suppress the treason by force. He must call for troops. In fact, he has notified me of such an intention, and to answer for Indiana I sent for you. I want you to become adjutant-general."

"But you have an adjutant-general," I returned.

"You mean M——n? He is on the other side—a sympathizer with the enemy."

"Where is the adjutant-general's office?"

"There is none."

"And the books?"

The governor answered, impatiently, "You know there have been none since Whitcomb's day."

"And the law defining the duties of adjutant-general?"

"It provides for little — almost nothing. We will have to cut loose and get on as best as we can."

Then he took from the table a telegram, and read it to me. I can only give the substance of it:

"The president will call immediately for seventy-five thousand men, and the quota of Indiana will be six regiments."

"Those regiments," the governor resumed, "I want raised without the loss of an hour. What do you say?"

I had then an inspiration.

"Governor, I would like to command one of them."

We were looking into each other's faces. His brows contracted and his eyes—they were large, full, and in the shade very black—were sober.

"Is it a condition?" he asked.

"No, I have already told you I am at your command."

The shade disappeared, and he smiled, probably at a suspicion of his own.

"Yes, any one of them you choose."

"That settles it," I said. "I am now sure you have confidence in me, and I am ready to begin work at once. Only one thing more."

"What is that?"

"I must have an assistant—maybe several."

"Have you anybody in mind?"

"Yes—Fred Kneffler, now in the county clerk's office."

"I know him."

"Right off, governor. We can get him, I think."

The governor then led the way to a room communicating with his own on the north.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"This will be your office," he said. "The telegraphing is sure to be heavy. Get a messenger; he must be strictly reliable; and if you discover a need of anything else, ask for it. I will have much to do aside from this business, so I leave it to you. When you are in doubt, come and consult me. Keep me posted all the time, and drive the duty. I want the credit of reporting Indiana's quota full, first of the states."

There was tremendous excitement in the city. There was quiet in my office, however, and, making a good ready, I stocked it with stationery and blank telegrams. Kneffler reported early. On the wall a map of the state was unrolled, showing towns, railroads, and railroad connections. Each of the city papers sent me a reporter. Messages were prepared for forwarding to the county seats. For the names of influential men to be addressed I consulted the governor, and from memory he made me a list rapidly as I could write at his dictation. What struck me at the moment as remarkable, he did not discriminate against Democrats. In giving the name of a person, he simply added "Democrat or Republican." So perfectly did he know, so profoundly had he studied the commonwealth he was governing.

This, I must subjoin, with other things quite as demonstrative, possessed me for the first time with an insight of the governor's political accomplishments. I had heard it said that he was a great man commencing a career; now the truth forced itself upon me. Viewing it, doubtless, as a profession, he had studied politics methodically, and come to know the state as a farmer knows his farm. With a clearer head I had never to do. Seemingly above surprise, he remembered exactly what he himself had said or had me do. He faced each problem as it arose with a confidence mixed equally, I

should say, of courage and judgment derived from the logic of the situation, for he had no guides, no precedents, no favoring statutes. The burden of responsibility being his, not mine, he had the right to be consulted, and I did it freely and loyally, and he gave his directions, or orders, if that term is more agreeable, always without hesitation, and positively. For that matter, he gave me lessons which, had I been a politician, selfishly watchful of my own advancement, would have been profitable in the highest degree. To use an old expression, Governor Morton was a born politician, and association with him was a pleasure.

Productive work began in my office Monday morning. Messages in reply poured in. By noon the state was seething. In every county companies were forming or consolidating. All railroad officials were instructed to bring them to the city as fast as they were organized, keeping accounts for future settlement. The wires in Indiana were never hotter than during Monday and Tuesday of that memorable week.

The governor, meantime, appointed a commissary and a quartermaster. Then there was a Camp Morton, which in two days grew into a city of sheds, booths, and tents.

A programme of reception for the incoming soldiers was left to me. It was possible, I thought, to manage the ceremony in such manner that the public looking on from the sidewalks might communicate a deal of patriotism to each arrival in its march along the street, and, at the same time, take back from it even more of the precious virtue. It happened that there were two independent companies of the city elegantly uniformed and already in offer of service. They were employed, and I hired a brass band, with the complement of a fife and drum corps. One or the other of these was



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

always in waiting at the central station. Immediately that an organization disembarked from a train, a column formed; then up Meridian to Washington Street it marched, the frantic cheers of the new soldiers answered by the thousands of men, women, and children lining the sidewalks. Down Washington Street westward the medley of music, men, and flags swept, ending at the state-house. There the governor appeared, and, standing on the great stone at the southeast corner, made a speech which no volunteer heard without a yet greater assurance of the holiness of his cause. At the end of the glorification, the arrived, officers and men, were conducted by one of my assistants to Camp Morton, where they were provided with bread, coffee, meat, and some kind of a roof under which to sleep in comfort. Until the gate of the camp was passed every attention possible was paid all who came for enlistment. Then and there began that interest on the part of Governor Morton which, instead of waning through the succeeding years of war, kept growing and intensifying; so that of his volunteers none ever got so far away in the spreading fields of conflict as to be beyond his care.

At midnight Friday I waited on the governor and reported one hundred and thirty companies in camp—that is, sixty, the number required by the president's call, and seventy over. He telegraphed the situation instantly, urging the retention of the overplus. I never heard which state was first with its quota; it is my impression, however, that the honor belongs to Indiana.

The governor then said, "I would like to have you stay with me."

I thanked him heartily, and replied, "If you do not positively object, I would rather go to the field."

There was no turning angles in his answer.

"Well, which regiment do you choose?"

"That depends upon where you begin the count."

"I do not understand you."

And I explained. "You remember the five regiments Indiana contributed in the war with Mexico."

"I see."

"Well, I would begin with six."

"Yes," he said, thinking, "that would be a proper complement, and prevent historical confusion."

"And not only that, governor; it would be an easy way of keeping tally of contributions of the kind."

"You are right," he said. "Begin with the Sixth."

"Then I will take the last number."

"You mean the *Eleventh*? Be it so; and when you get fixed in camp I will come and see you."

With the governor's consent, I had already contracted for a thousand Zouave uniforms and for converting an old freight depot into barracks, with a spacious kitchen at one end and bunks in frame against the walls. And now—it was considerably after midnight when I left the executive office to ride to Camp Morton—now I, so lately content with the thought of a captaincy, was a *colonel* going to my command! That the night was over me and the town asleep were gentle things much in my favor; without them I fear my very good-feeling must have made an exhibit of me to passers by. There is no flattery sweeter than that with which one gives himself, and I was not mean with the sweetness, one may be sure. And yet the enjoyment was now and then disturbed by intrusive recollections of the responsibilities that were inseparable from the higher rank. If I failed—how far the fall would be! And I thought of Lucifer and his descent a week in depth, but went on. May a man tell what he can do

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

until he tries? That, I take it, is the soul of the *Americanism* which has made us a peculiar people, almost separatists.

So, with my courage screwed to the sticking-point, having already selected ten companies out of the one hundred and thirty, I marched the Eleventh regiment of Indiana Volunteers out of Camp Morton into barracks. This was done quickly and without notice in the early dawn. In the afternoon of the same day the public was given to see the first dress-parade by a full regiment ever held in the limits of the state.

## XXX

Uniform of the Eleventh Regiment Gray Zouaves—Mrs. Cady—  
 “Remember Buena Vista”—Sent to Evansville—Drill—The passing steamer—Winfield Scott—Ordered to Cumberland, Maryland.

THERE was nothing of the flashy, Algerian colors in the uniform of the Eleventh Indiana; no red fez, a head-gear exclusively Mohammedan, and therefore to be religiously avoided by Christians; no red breeches, no red or yellow sash with tassels big as early cabbages. Our outfit was of the tamest gray twilled goods, not unlike home-made jeans—a visor cap, French in pattern, its top of red cloth not larger than the palm of one's hand; a blue flannel shirt with open neck; a jacket Greekish in form, edged with narrow binding, the red scarcely noticeable; breeches baggy, but not petticoated; button gaiters connecting below the knees with the breeches, and strapped over the shoe. The effect was to magnify the men, though in line two thousand yards off they looked like a smoky ribbon long-drawn out.

The day soon came around, when, after muster in, the Eleventh marched to the state-house to receive its colors from the patriotic ladies of the city. The march down was one continuous ovation. Ployed into column of divisions closed in mass in front of the stone platform at the famous southeast corner, an immense multitude of people crowding the space clear to the street, we heard Mrs. Cady's beautiful speech of presentation, the reply to which, of course, belonged to me. I cannot remember when I so wanted to be an orator. Fortunate-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ly, everybody, citizen and soldier, was in the state of feverish excitement that makes the feelings most susceptible; and yet the by-standers were less in mind than the regiment. I wished to impress it memorably, and to that object bent my best endeavor.

After the thanks and promises in reply usual at such times with speakers, I turned, the colors in my hand, to the regiment, then, like myself, all wrought up.

"My men," I said, "you all know of the battle of Buena Vista—twenty thousand Mexican soldiers against four thousand Americans; yet the victory was with our flags. You know, also, that Indiana was represented there by two regiments, the Second and Third. The Third did not yield an inch of ground. The Second was less fortunate. While fighting single-handed two divisions of the enemy, full seven thousand strong—eighteen to one—in the midst of their well-doing their colonel's heart failed him, and he ordered a retreat. He sent no flag back to be rallied on—he took no step whatever looking to a rally. 'Cease firing, and retreat,' he called out; and as they stopped fighting and looked at him in wonder, again he called out, 'Cease firing, and retreat.' There had been but three hundred and sixty of them in line in the beginning, and of that total ninety were upon the ground dead or wounded. Now, all, who could, obeyed the order of their colonel, and broke to the rear—in flight, if you please. Still the greater body of them rallied, and under their own flag and officers kept the field fighting the remainder of the day, their colonel having abandoned them and joined a Mississippi regiment as a private.

"Now, the regiment the colonel joined was commanded by Jefferson Davis, whom you all know as a leader of the unrighteous rebellion we are going to help quell. That day he assisted in proclaiming the Second Indi-

ana cowards, if, indeed, he did not originate the accusation. He was the son-in-law of the general commanding our army, and he induced that officer to repeat the slander in his official report. The sorry tale I have now to tell you clings to the brave men of the Second regiment, the living and the dead. It sticks to the state no less. The stain is upon you and me. It attaches to these flags just received, because they are now our property, and we of Indiana. So what have we to do, my men? What but to recognize that the war we are summoned to is twice holy—for the Union first, then to wipe the blot from our state and infamize our slanderer?

“And that we may not forget our duty, that it may be always present, and never more so than in battle, soldiers of the Eleventh Indiana, I give you a regimental motto levelled at the man who, from having been vilifier, has become the archtraitor of his country. Kneel every one of you.”

They went down like one.

“Hold up your right hands.”

Every hand raised.

“Repeat after me, and swear now—‘God helping us, we will remember Buena Vista.’ There, you have a motto, ‘Remember Buena Vista.’”

They took the oath and accepted the motto. The witnesses of the scene shouted, their eyes full of tears. We all went back to our quarters better soldiers than when we left them.<sup>1</sup> That was my proudest day. Distinction won in youth is very pleasant, and I was then but thirty-four years old.

<sup>1</sup> I have been asked so often for this speech that there is a justification for its reproduction. It is given nearly as I can now remember. As a motto, “Remember Buena Vista” became of general acceptance by the Indiana regiments.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The term of service—but three months—allowed scant time in which to get the regiment in condition to meet an enemy; and I am free to say that but for the assistance of Lieutenant-Colonel McGinnis and Major Wood, both of whom were well up in the tactics ordinarily practised, the task with all the willingness of the men would have been impossible. Then we realized how fortunate it was that in choosing companies I had taken all at the time of the call organized in the state—three from Indianapolis, two from Terre Haute, and my own of Crawfordsville. The great trouble was that nobody outside the latter knew the first lesson of the Zouave system.

A stout argument in favor of Zouave methods can be given. None other so well cultivates capacity in the soldier to render a good account of himself individually under every battle condition. No veteran will now sneer at being able to fight on his belly as well as on his feet. And what can be said against the double time habitual to the Zouave? Or of the exchange of husky voices of command for exhilarating bugles, making it easy for a colonel to order his regiment stretched though it may be out of sight over a mountain or in the depths of a tangled wood. The tactics of the Boer in action is genuine Zouave; and having come to the system partially, why should not the United States army be trained to it in its purity? All armies, in short, must come to it; so say the repeating-rifle and the breech-loaders, Gatling, Maxim, and field.

Luckily, in my days of waiting for what was upon me, I had written a full course of instruction; and now I had only to call my officers into school and initiate them. Soon the regiment was working at the novelty; and then the rush and tear of a thousand men advancing, retreating, taking and closing intervals, changing front on the centre,



firing in all positions, and doing anything of manœuvre on the run or the double-quick, and ordered by the bugle, begot the liveliest interest on the part of participants, while to spectators the practice was a downright show.

The first order that came to me was from Lorenzo Thomas, adjutant-general. It directed that I proceed with my regiment to Evansville in the southwestern corner of Indiana. Kentucky was about to commit herself to neutrality. As if her domain could continue respected by the belligerents! Already there was a suspicion in Washington that military supplies were being shipped through her borders to the South in view of which I was to establish a search of boats passing down the Ohio River. The delicacy of the task can be understood by recalling that the war in prospect merely had not yet broken up any of the established usages of peace.

Moreover, a report had gone to headquarters that Evansville was a hot-bed of secession. Great was the surprise of the city when at daybreak the regiment disembarked from the train and took its way in silence through the streets to a camp-site on the river below the town. The moral effect was wonderful. Though largely in the majority, the Union people had been cowed by influence on the Kentucky side; now, before noon, Evansville looked a-bloom with flowers, such radiant flaunting was there of the stars and stripes on the house-tops and cupolas.

The search of vessels was odious work, especially to the boatmen. Sometimes, doubtless, the details performing the duty were too zealous; still I had no difficulty except with one captain.

I had procured, it should be said, the services of an artillery company of the state in the city. The captain and his men were Germans, and loyal as the best of us. His two six-pounders were in battery night and day on



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

a bluff commanding the river up and down. To bring boats to, the orders were to use blank-cartridges, keeping a shotted gun for emergencies.

The exceptional boat came down one day crowded with passengers. The captain was summoned as usual by a gun. He kept on. A second gun; still no attention. Now he was opposite the battery driving swiftly by. Captain K——s, thinking an emergency had come, began training the shotted piece on the recusant steamer. His German blood was boiling and he certainly would have fired had I not reached him in the nick of time, drawn by the second shot.

The guards of the boat and the hurricane-deck, when I looked at them, were covered with women and children in gay attire, some of whom waved their handkerchiefs, while, dreamless of danger, all stood gazing with innocent wonder at the white tents of our camp shimmering through the trees on the hill-side. Shoot at them? What an unspeakable crime! Though the vessel had been heaped from keel to pilot-house with contraband of war, there could have been no extenuation. Doubtless the captain of the boat counted on their presence. On my cot that night I had visions of a round shot crashing through the flimsy panelling of the steamer, leaving a wake of blood in its track. A long time between then and now; yet my gratitude for that escape is fervid as ever.

In the stay at Evansville I pushed the drill of the regiment. Four hours for company, four for battalion—such the schooling. The grumbling was loud, sometimes angry; but it was met with a spell of stone-deafness. The exercises drew great notice from the townspeople as well as the gentry over the river. Three weeks thus, and the progress was wonderful, not in drill merely, but also in endurance.

LEW WALLACE

Then a change came, and not any too soon. A telegram was put in my hand.

Washington, June 1861.  
Colonel Lewis Wallace:  
— — —  
You will  
proceed, by rail, to Cumberland,  
Maryland & report to Major  
General Patterson  
Winfield Scott  
The foregoing is a copy  
from memory.  
Winfield Scott

One not himself an old soldier may have difficulty imagining in what ways that telegram delighted me. It was not that it relieved me of the unpleasant duty at Evansville; many acquaintances happily made had by that time converted my stay there into pleasantness. Neither was it that my wish for more active service was at length granted. It was—shall I say it?—the name at the foot of the order—*Winfield Scott*. Coming

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

direct from him, instead of through the adjutant-general's office, the order conferred a rare distinction. To be known to Winfield Scott, to be addressed by him—what an appeal to my vanity! What encouragement! I thought of Lundy's Lane, and the battles to which the Mexican capital had succumbed, and the long time, beginning in my childhood, during which he had been my ideal soldier; and now—I read and reread the telegram. The "Winfield Scott" at the bottom made the paper actually shine as with a splendor.

I gave a hurried thought to the general situation. The army at Washington had been reported ready to move against Richmond, the then seat of Confederate government. With General Beauregard at Manassas Junction blocking the road, a battle was unavoidable. Aside from that, General Joe Johnston held Harper's Ferry, watched by General Patterson at Hagerstown. The need of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad for purposes of supply and communication was imperative. Little did I suspect that its rescue was to fall to me, my first achievement.

Where was Cumberland relatively to Patterson at Hagerstown and Morris at Grafton? I consulted a map, gleaning nothing but the location of Cumberland on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, midway between Hagerstown and Grafton. The distance made support by either Morris or Patterson impossible; so that the occupancy of Cumberland looked like isolation. Over in Virginia lay Romney but a little removed from Cumberland. What if it were garrisoned by the enemy? That I was about to be put on trial was obvious—my first trial under conditions of self-dependency. A qualm of doubt and a shiver struck me. I knew so little of the regions to which I was going, and had so little of experience in military operations.

## XXXI

The route to Cumberland—Reception in Indianapolis and Cincinnati—The arrival in Grafton—General Tom Morris—The situation at Cumberland—Colonel McGinnis—The arrival in Cumberland—The encampment.

THE route to Cumberland ran through Ohio to Grafton, where General Tom Morris had headquarters. Besides being an excellent officer, he was a personal friend whom I doubted not getting every particular of the status in Cumberland.

At Indianapolis the train rolled into the station with the city in attendance, though it was after midnight. There, too, the three companies of the place were set upon by friends and relatives in such numbers, and so loaded with delicacies from their kitchens, that schedule time was out of question. So a night was lost.

The reception at Cincinnati was even more memorable. To get to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad we had to traverse the city. The day could not have been more favorable for display. Every bit of metal in the column, plate, buckle, bayonet, sparkled under touches of the clear sun. Fourth Street from pavement to house-top was a mass of excited humanity; yet the regiment dominated the spectacle—the men appeared so large in stature, and moved so in their unity like a machine, making withal so light of their arms and equipments. It was easy to imagine the street trembling under their unbroken tread. The cheers they received were but a fair return for their martial showing. Still I saw tears



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

in many eyes. Women looking at the beaming faces in the ranks pitied the youthful strangers. The war was new, and everybody who had to do with it, even as a spectator of passing pageants, tender-hearted.

My train stopped in Grafton about noon. The soldiers everywhere present made it apparent that the town was in the grip of war. A man in uniform conducted me to General Morris. Orderlies were at his doors. Cavalrymen stood by their horses booted and spurred. Within, officers were at work, with clerks behind tables. The general met me cordially. He was making ready, he said, for a movement likely to end in an engagement with the enemy. The difficulties were increased by the inexperience of everybody.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"I am under orders for Cumberland."

"And you report to whom?"

"I wish it were to you; as it is, I belong to General Patterson."

"Will you be at Cumberland alone?"

"Far as I know, yes."

He looked concerned, and said, "I wish you had company."

"What is the situation at Cumberland?"

"It is a Union city heavily sprinkled with mischievous secessionists. Romney is a day's march from it, and there is a body of Confederates in camp there from thirteen hundred to two thousand in number. I am afraid they will give you trouble."

"Is that report reliable?"

"I think so."

"Are there any obstructions of the road from Grafton to Cumberland?"

"Joe Johnston, you know, is at Harper's Ferry, so that beyond Cumberland the railroad is useless; but

from this to Cumberland it is open unless at New Creek, where the bridge is in keeping of a company of loyal guards. As the force at Romney keeps very quiet, I can't see why they are there unless as an outpost to look after Johnston's line of retreat up Winchester valley."

"Then if I were to give Romney a shaking up, it would disturb Johnston some?"

Morris laughed, and said, "Make sure before you try that."

Then as I arose to take my leave, he said, further: "Going down, you had better keep a good lookout for bushwhackers. Make certain also of your engineer."

Fifty thousand cartridges had in the mean time been rushed aboard the train, of which forty rounds to the man were distributed. So that when I got beyond Grafton the atmosphere seemed to undergo a change. I was within the theatre of active war, and its possibilities, not to speak of its dangers, were about me. Of such also was the air I breathed.

Very naturally I did some thinking inspired by the news of a force at Romney. Instead of waiting for them to trouble me, why should not I take the initiative? The moral effect might reach clear to Harper's Ferry, particularly if I were successful, and that it would secure me immunity at Cumberland was certain. Then if I waited, Johnston was likely to reinforce the camp at Romney. And then if my attack were repulsed? My need was information of the country, and I tried the engineer. He proved to be intelligent, and when he clinched his assertion of loyalty by saying he was an Ohio man born and bred, he won my faith.

"It may be important for me to have guides familiar with the region between Cumberland and Romney,"

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I said to him. "Can you name one likely to accept my employment?"

"Yes," he replied, "I know two. They live at Piedmont, the next town."

At Piedmont he brought them to me.

"What do you say to joining me as guides?" I asked them.

One of them laughed dryly, and said to the other, "They make it hot for us"; then, in a different tone, "We've no love for them, and we will go with you."

"What wages will you expect?"

"You'll feed us, won't you?"

"Yes, and more, too."

"Then not a cent."

"Can you go with me now?"

"Right off."

"Get aboard."

I took them in the engineer's cab with me, and they made a rough diagram of the lay of the land to Romney, showing two roads—one, the turnpike from Cumberland to Romney, twenty-three miles; the other, from Cumberland to New Creek by rail, and from the latter place across country, also twenty-three miles. The turnpike, they said, was constantly patrolled by horsemen, while the New Creek road was not watched, because nobody thought of danger from that direction. The objection to the New Creek route was that it was over mountains, and consequently hard on men afoot. There were also places along it where a company would laugh at a regiment. As for the strength of the force at Romney, they agreed that it was not less than twelve hundred nor more than fifteen hundred. They had seen the whole body on parade.

Upon this information, I resolved to attack Romney before going into quarters at Cumberland, and, thinking

it best to enter the city in the daytime, bivouacked six or seven miles out on a branch of the Potomac.

That evening, in the light of a blazing camp-fire, Colonel McGinnis and I discussed a plan, and chose to take the New Creek road which, being unwatched, would give us a chance to surprise the enemy.

In the discussion we considered every objection to the movement. Forty-six miles, counting an immediate return as part of the march, would be unprecedented for infantry in one day; nevertheless, reducing the problem to one of physical endurance, we decided that the month of hard Zouave drilling just undergone at Evansville was to be treated as training sufficient for the task; besides which the men should travel light as possible. Once front to front with the rebels—in that day nobody spoke of them as Confederates—the *esprit* of the regiment could be relied upon, particularly if warm breakfasts in Romney were held out as an incentive.

I decided then to proceed to Cumberland first. That our presence in the city would be promptly reported to headquarters in Romney was quite certain; and the military there, reasoning that we would naturally require time to settle and get down to business before thinking about enterprises to their disturbance, would be all the more unsuspecting.

Keeping the companies on the train when arrived, I would ride as if looking for a camp-site; and then pretending that one near town in every way suitable could not be found, and that the place of bivouac the night before up the river was preferable, we would make a show of returning thither. Once under way, however, instead of stopping, we would continue on to New Creek. Starting from New Creek for Romney at four o'clock, I had no doubt of being able to march the



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

twenty-three miles, nothing untoward occurring, by six o'clock in the morning—possibly sooner. In other words, I proceeded in the scheme of operation upon the presumption that all I did and said would be promptly carried to the man, whoever he was, my opponent in Romney.

The train rolled into Cumberland at daybreak. The city and all its vicinity lay in a shroud of mist. Evidently notice of our coming had not preceded us. As they moved slowly in, a small boy discovered the cars were loaded with soldiers. He ran giving the alarm. Presently some men came cautiously down the street; a little later women appeared; but there was no haste by anybody to greet us. At length I sent Adjutant Macauley for the mayor, and he responded in person. I told him who we were, and that I had been ordered by the military authorities to take charge of Cumberland and guard it. He expressed himself delighted by my arrival. He said he was a Union man, and that a majority of the people round about were in accord with him. He then courteously invited me to breakfast. In declining, I inquired if he knew of a ground conveniently near fit for a permanent encampment. There were several, he replied, and he would be glad to show them to me. I arranged then to ride with him and such of his friends as he might invite. The news respecting us spread rapidly after the mayor's departure, and soon the entire tenantry of the town flocked to see "the Hoosiers in the big gray breeches."

Colonel McGinnis and I made the rounds with the mayor and several of his friends, after which I expressed great regret that none of the places visited were as good for my purposes as the ground of our bivouac up the river the night previous. The search for one nearer town would be resumed in a day or two. For the pres-

## LEW WALLACE

ent the men needed rest. Accordingly, at ten o'clock the train with the regiment, less two companies, pushed back up the railroad.

The two companies were left to pitch their tents and amuse the public.

## XXXII

From New Creek to Romney—Capture of a rebel major—Surprise prevented—The broken suspender-buckle—The enemy retreats—The welcome of the negroes—The incident of the farm-house—Rebel supplies captured.

A STRONG detail was left at the bridge to guard the train; then about four o'clock in the afternoon, with eight companies, in all quite five hundred men, the march from New Creek to Romney began. Knapsacks, blankets, and haversacks were discarded and word given out that there was no hope of breakfast or dinner except we took the town. Silence was enjoined, or if a gun were fired, unless by my order, he who did it should be summarily drummed out of the service. With one of the guides, I took place at the head of the column on foot, like all the rest, thinking by my example to stimulate the weary and faint of heart.

Guessing at the time, I allowed a rest of five minutes at the end of every fifteen minutes. About midnight the stars went out, and the darkness became so deep that the files kept together chiefly by the grind of gravel under foot and the muffled rattle of canteens. What with the obscurity, and the frequent halts, and the difficult ascent of mountain crowding mountain in quick succession, progress was necessarily slow.

We came upon a straggling hamlet. In one house a light was burning, and, as luck would have it, a woman opened a door attracted by the commotion among the dogs; hearing us in passage, she screamed. In a minute

the population was agog. Then—according to the story told me afterwards—a man led an unsaddled horse out of a back gate, and, by paths known to himself, rode hard as he could go to town.

On a few miles farther, another man rode unsuspectingly into us, and we captured him. He proved to be a rebel major. Dismounting him, and putting a soldier with a sore foot on his horse, I politely invited him to go with us, and he was pleased to accept. He was one of the worst scared men I ever saw.

Dawn was flinging its earliest glow into the sky, and, according to the guide, Romney not more than two miles away. Suddenly, while I was at the foot of the column seeing to something, there was a jam. What was the matter? Minutes were precious. I ran forward, and overtook a *contretemps* as ridiculous as it was provoking. The first company, closed upon the advance-guard, had come upon a noisy mountain stream, and the captain, noticing a log thrown to the opposite bank, was using it as a bridge, and when I reached him he was crossing his men one by one over it. The forenoon could have been easily exhausted in that way. Taking to the water at once, my example prevailed with the succeeding companies.

Hardly had the order of march been resumed when a party of horsemen, probably a vedette, appeared at the top of a low hill and fired upon my advance-guard, who engaged them pluckily and drove them off unassisted. Then I knew a surprise was no longer to be hoped; at the same time, by hurrying forward, the minutes of preparation to receive us would be materially lessened. At last our goal appeared, and this was what I beheld: The road ran down to a wooden bridge over the south branch of the Potomac; beyond the bridge it coursed sinuously up a long hill to the town on the summit. On



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the side of the hill, facing us and probably a mile away, stretched a line of men carefully ordered, their arms glittering in the sunlight. In the centre two field-pieces were conspicuous, as doubtless it was intended they should be.

Calling a halt, I hastened to the bridge to see if it was intact, and noticed on the farther side a two-story red brick house half curtained by orchard trees. It appeared deserted by man and beast; and for that reason partly, and partly because it so conveniently commanded the exit of the bridge, I regarded it something to beware of. Turning then to the aggregation on the hill-side, I estimated it carefully, taking my own command as a basis, at a thousand or twelve hundred. Of colors there were none to be seen, an absence due probably to the extreme youth of the Confederacy. The signs were that I was expected to attack by the road; but the hill being so steep that a change of front was impossible, if the assault were upon his left flank, the unwisdom of accommodating my enemy forced itself upon me. When I looked finally from the array to the town; some of the roofs showing on the height, the reserves there, if any there were, could not be seen. Indeed, I concluded the town abandoned by its inhabitants.

The advance-guard, when it came to me, was directed to rush the bridge, and observe the house from behind the embankment on the other side. Sure enough, upon their showing, a fire opened upon them. They returned it at a disadvantage on account of the trees; yet the interchange was lively and exciting. Then I led the first company across. A sergeant was struck, but saved serious injury by his suspender-buckle. Making use of a ditch by the roadside, my men speedily possessed themselves of the offending premises, but, sorry to say, not the occupants. They were too quick in getting away.

## LEW WALLACE

As in case of a repulse the bridge would be invaluable to us, a company was left in its charge. The house I ordered the captain to burn.

Then the command pushed on double-quick and with intervals taken, only, instead of following the road, it was turned to the right up a hill of meadow smoothness. At a short distance we came to a gorge with a rocky face on our side. Ordinary infantry, I am confident, could not have crossed without serious disorder. To my Zouaves it was scarcely an obstruction. At the farther side the ascent was gradual, and once on the top, as each man knew, the town was at our mercy.

There was no opposition, and, the summit gained, I closed intervals and changed direction left. Approaching the brow of the long hill which had been so lately occupied by the enemy in battle array, we were thunder-struck. Not a man was to be seen. The guns had been limbered up and had disappeared while we were crossing the gorge. Behind a line of skirmishers we advanced through the streets cautiously, but in time to see a mixed multitude of men, women, children, and soldiers in the distance flying for life under cover of a cloud of dust; and it was said they never stopped running until at Winchester.

We had won a town of pretensions all—never anything cheaper—for a broken suspender-buckle.

The bareback rider from the hamlet in the mountains had borne the news of our coming in such good time that the caution with which we advanced through the streets was unnecessary. If a white person remained in the place it was in a cellar or under a bed, where we did not care to look. Even the bank had been left to us; but as I set a guard over the building, the owners suffered no loss, unless it might have been in their breakfastless trip to Winchester.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

But because the gentry had flown, it must not be supposed there was nobody at home. The colored people met us with the cheeriest welcome, and in time incredibly short there was not a hungry man in the regiment. Nor was it a common meal they set. It is but fair to the bread-winners of that day in Romney to admit the ample store of good things in pantry and smoke-house, and that the famous old Virginia flavor was in every dish the "aunties" were pleased to serve.

The camp adjoining town did not escape so lightly. Three wagons, with their teams, were impressed and loaded with equipments, guns, tents, and an excellent supply of medical stores. The provisions were condemned at sight and despoiled. With that exception, the find was pronounced lawful spoils of war.

At three o'clock, when inspection was had and the column formed for departure, the only curious things noticeable were packages, generally in clean white napkins, swinging from guns at shoulder. Some of them were opened with discovery of nothing more objectionable than edibles of one kind or another warm from the oven.

At the bridge, while the company left in charge of it were lunching, I observed that the brick house was standing untouched, and spoke to the captain.

"Didn't I tell you to burn that house?"

"Yes," he said, "but I couldn't."

"Why not?"

"Well, if you will hear him, I'll let this old man speak for me."

A gray-haired, farmer-looking person stepped up.

"The house is mine," he said, respectfully; "I raised a family in it, sir, and it is very dear to me. This morning, sir, some young men from the town came and took possession. I suppose they thought it would be a good

## LEW WALLACE

place to fire on you. I couldn't resist them, sir. Then when the captain would have burned me out, I pleaded with him, and he agreed, sir, like a gentleman, to wait for you."

"Yes," said the captain, "I'll burn it now, if you say so."

I shook the old gentleman's hand, and told the bugler to blow "Forward."

Having repossessed ourselves of the train at the New Creek bridge, and loaded up our plunder, I left the teams, which were private property, to be returned to Romney; and at eleven o'clock at night we were in return for Cumberland.

Next day, in the afternoon, dress-parade was had as usual, nobody apparently the worse for the forty-six miles travelled, not to speak of the skirmish which was the incident of the march.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XXXIII

In camp at Cumberland—*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*—Congratulations from General Scott—Help refused—General Patterson—General McClellan—Corporal David Hay—The Fight of the Scouts—Colonel Biddle and the Pennsylvania Militia.

ACROSS a stone bridge over a little river, which was one of the ornaments of the old city of Cumberland, I found a plateau on a height, enough to accommodate the regiment in camp, and took possession of it. A more ideal site for the purpose cannot be imagined. Near it was a cleared field easily convertible into a drill-ground; and thus tricked out, we went to work as at Evansville.

The good results of the raid on Romney were not slow in showing themselves. The regiment took on the *esprit de corps* aimed at from the beginning; that it could march so far in a day, and, against odds, win a garrisoned town by the simple offer of fight, secured the confidence of the loyal people of Cumberland.

Then, when news of the raid went abroad beyond the localities first to feel its effect, not only was importance given to the affair; it received a welcome from the authorities and the public that astonished nobody so much as ourselves. Later in the war, to be sure, it had passed unnoticed. To illustrate—whereas, I had not thought of making a formal report, lest it should be misconstrued, and laughed at in military circles, an order from General Patterson to send him full particulars surprised me, and I hardly knew how to take it. The report sent was my earliest attempt in that line of litera-

ture, and a pretty poor one it was. Next the newspapers made much of the affair; and when an artist of *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly* sought privileges in our camp,<sup>1</sup> I began to realize a distinction won. It was all very sweet, indeed; but the climax came in an autograph note of congratulations from General Scott, which I understood better when, a little later, intelligence reached us that General Johnston, upon hearing the tale of woe carried to Winchester by the frightened folk of Romney, had evacuated Harper's Ferry, believing himself seriously threatened from the west, while General Patterson was in close observation on the north. So, having given Romney the shaking up jocularly alluded to in my conversation with General Morris, at Grafton, much had come of it—namely, the release of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad to the national authorities for supply and communication. This, doubtless, was what General Scott was thanking me for in his kindly note.

It must not be supposed now that I lapped myself in peaceful dreams because delightfully housed, so to speak, on the pine-covered height above Cumberland.

My first step was to establish a bureau of information. A gentleman in Cumberland undertook the delicate business. Through a secret correspondent he kept me posted as to affairs in Romney; among other things I heard promptly of the arrival there of cavalry, artillery, and infantry, four thousand in all, under a Colonel McD——d.

Judging that gentleman by myself, I fancied him sleeplessly anxious to repay my attentions by attentions in kind, particularly as he now had ample means with which to square the account.

<sup>1</sup> His drawings are in the *Illustrated Weekly* of that period.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I asked General Patterson for assistance; he could give me none. About that time General George B. McClellan relieved General Morris, and the same request preferred to him brought me the same reply. My condition then became one of isolation; and forced to take care of myself, I set to and studied the geography of the region.

The first need was a line of retreat, and I found one in a highway running northwardly into Pennsylvania.

Next there were but two roads of approach from Romney—one by the turnpike already mentioned; the other by way of Frostburg. With respect to the latter, the Mount Airy coal-miners were both numerous and loyal, and they readily agreed to keep watch over it for me.

Vastly more difficult was the problem presented in connection with the turnpike, for it included care of the roads, paths, and passes of the whole stretch of country between Cumberland and Romney. In that study I learned to appreciate the value of cavalry.

The conclusion may be inferred from what was done. Detachments were sent into the country to impress horses for the mount of a company; they came back with thirteen all told, and I had to content myself with them. They were pretty fair, but would have been condemned by a government inspector. After a dress-parade I called for volunteers, it being explained that they were to serve as scouts; to my surprise, the entire regiment stepped three paces front. Indeed, there was quite a controversy over the call. The command I gave to Corporal David Hay; and the duty was entered upon, it should be said, not one of the thirteen deterred by the superstition attaching to the number.

The presence of the superior force in Romney made formidable by cavalry and artillery, drew general at-

tention to my position, and, the solicitude being unreasonably stimulated, all kinds of dreadful rumors were put in circulation about us. After little, the enemy moved out and burned the New Creek railway bridge; then, communication with Grafton being broken, it was announced that we were cut off, and there was fear in Indiana.

The situation did, indeed, become exciting; at the same time there was not a minute in which I was beyond helping myself. In saying this I am bound to give credit to the people of Cumberland. Without them it had not been possible for me to have held my position.

The rations gave out; my commissary bought of dealers in town all he required.

The ammunition threatened failure. Again the town came to my relief; and the world not having then advanced beyond the paper cartridge, Colonel McGinnis took a detail and made a fresh supply.

Then, too, a tobacco famine fell upon us. Not a man in camp, myself included, had wherewith to quiet the general wail. Banker Shriver heard of the condition, and came to our relief with an offer to advance a month's pay to every commissioned officer. The offer was gladly accepted. It is needless to say, I hope, that the good man was made whole to the last cent.

In the mean time I made ready against a possible necessity of getting away. There were a number of curios in my camp, relics of the late raid, and I did not relish the thought of making contributions of the kind in return, not even a handful of beans. Then shortly, what with impressed wagons and teams parked within the lines, the camp had a singular likeness to a county fair on its great day.

Once my scouts hastened in to report a column in



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

force from Romney moving over the mountains towards Frostburg by the only route to my rear. A little later a messenger from the miners at Mount Airy confirmed the news. It was wonderful how quickly the camp property was loaded into the wagons. When the scouts were all in we marched through the town. The consternation there was great. The flags on the housetops and along the streets disappeared, reminding me of delicate flowers hit hard by a biting frost. Cautioning the citizens whom I met to keep to their houses during my absence, especially after night, I took the road to Pennsylvania. The movement had every appearance of a retreat, and it was amusing to hear the men shouting at me, "Remember Buena Vista." After the train had been escorted beyond the intersecting road by which I surmised the enemy was coming, suddenly the column was faced about, and as the men caught my purpose they broke into cheers. Some days before I had chosen a ground in anticipation of the emergency upon me, and now returned to it, and made every disposition for battle. While waiting, horsemen from Mount Airy reported that the enemy, after advancing to a point about four miles away, had suddenly turned back towards Romney.

In the morning our tents again whitened the plateau on the heights above the city to the good cheer of the faithful; again their flowery flags re-illuminated its house-tops.

While in position out on the road waiting the pleasure of my opponent, Colonel McD——d, I was visited by an idea which, when in my tent again, I made haste to try. Among those to whom I had applied for assistance was Governor Curtin, of Pennsylvania. He, too, had failed to discover a possibility of helping me. Now I telegraphed him, renewing my request, and informing him that, if hard pushed, my intention was to retreat

## LEW WALLACE

into his state; in which event it was more than likely the enemy would follow me, and prove the reputed wealth of his border counties in cattle and horses. Next day I was gladdened by notice from the governor of two regiments of his "State Reserves," with a battery of six guns, ordered to my support under Colonel Biddle. When, by the notice, they should have arrived, but had not, I rode out in search of them, and found a most ludicrous situation. The governor had instructed Colonel Biddle to go as far as the state line between Pennsylvania and Maryland, but not to cross it. This was provoking, for already I had mapped out a sortie against Romney. Still Captain Campbell of the battery gave me a hearty laugh. He had not taken kindly to the restraining order; he even thought it disgraceful, and when I came upon him his guns were all in battery, their muzzles extended over what he energetically denominated, "the damned state line." It was the extreme limit of his tether.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XXXIV

Between Romney and Cumberland—The thirteen scouts—Silverheels—Farley and Hay—Spoils of battle—Virginia losses—At the culvert—Hand-to-hand fight—Hallowell—The death of Hollenback—Search for the dead—Congratulations from Patterson, McClellan, and Colfax.

THE country between Romney and Cumberland is to be thought of in the time under consideration as very debatable. It swarmed with scouts of both sides; only those of the enemy roamed about in large parties, while in groups seldom of more than three mine lurked in the fastnesses. Occasionally shots were exchanged.

For two days I had gone without a word of the enemy. The intelligence office could get me nothing; neither could Corporal Hay. I began to suspect my opponent, Colonel McD—d, was again in motion, and that for better concealment of his plans he was curtaining the roads and passes with his cavalry. At all events, it was not safe for me to abide in such a state of ignorance.

In the morning of the third day, early, I called the corporal into my tent, and materially changed the directions under which he had been acting. This time he was to unite his thirteen men, take the turnpike, and keep it until he could bring me something reliable.

The brave man looked me in the face, and said, "Well, that means a fight."

And I answered, "If you can't do better, fight."

I went with him to where his comrades were in the saddle, and among them, and satisfied myself that they

were all provided as well as could be. They had rifles with sword-bayonets—the latter fairly good for hand-to-hand encounter. They were young, enthusiastic, and by this time accustomed to scouting; as theretofore they had succeeded in driving everything before them, possibly their natural courage was too strongly tinctured with confidence.

Out of a vivid remembrance of what the little company actually did that day, as well as gratitude, I stop here to give their names, remarking that the original list had undergone a change. They were David B. Hay, E. N. Baker, Company A; Ed. Burkett, J. C. Hollenback, Company B; Tim Grover, James Hallowell, Company C; Thomas Brazier, Company D; George W. Wudbarger, Company E; Lewis Farley, Company F; Frank Harrison, Company H; P. M. Dunlap, Company I; Robert Dunlap and E. P. Thomas, Company K.

It was June 27th, too beautiful for anything but perfect peace.

I shook hands with each one of them, and, noticing Hay's horse, I spoke to him and asked if it was not new.

"Yes."

"Where did you get him?"

"I saw a man riding him over in the hills yonder and took a notion to him."

"He looks like running stock."

"So he is. In Romney they know him as Silverheels."

He had captured the horse in one of his many scouting scuffles up in the debatable zone.

Taking to the turnpike, the party disappeared; and what follows now is hearsay, but hearsay so well corroborated as to be entitled to implicit belief.

Hay kept the turnpike boldly, intending to make



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

prisoner of the first man he came upon, and squeeze him for news. A few miles out he rode up a hill, and from the top looked down into a village ambitiously christened Frankfort. He drew rein, shaking his hand to caution his followers. The one long street below was full of soldiers easily recognizable as infantry. Hitched to the fences he saw saddled horses which told him of cavalry thereabouts.

"We could have killed as many of them at one fire as we had rifles," he told me afterwards.

"Why didn't you?" I asked.

He shook his head. "The idiots! They had no look-outs, and shooting them would have been too much like murder."

Instead of firing, Hay and his party kept their place, and agreed upon an estimate of the number of the enemy; then they turned and rode a distance back to a divergent road leading up into wooded hills, and finally to the railroad. To save their horses they jogged slowly on, intending to try another but more obscure route to Romney. It was about eleven o'clock when, starting down a height somewhat steep, they overtook a body of rebel horsemen going in the same direction. There was no call of halt. Each scout stopped involuntarily. Then they unslung their rifles. Hay did the counting.

"There are only forty-one of them," he said, in a low voice. "What do you say, boys?"

"Go in, Dave."

"Are you ready?"

"All ready," they answered..

The Virginians were at serious disadvantage. The road under them was narrow, and furrowed by wash-outs; on their right the land dropped into a ravine; while the bank at their left sloped too steeply up for climbing except afoot. To 'bout face and charge, or

even meet a charge, was impossible. In a word, they had no resource but to go on. All this Hay discerned.

"Come on," he shouted, at the top of his voice, forgetting to fire. "Come on. The best horse gets the first man."

The enemy heard the cry and drew reins. They saw Hay in the lead, Silver-heels plunging down, and behind a trail of men in big gray breeches, some brandishing short guns, some with sword-bayonets gleaming high in air, all yelling, all in motion, like boulders let loose. Then they, too, set up a counter yell, and began crowding one another down the broken way fast as they could go.

Farley's hack put him next to Hay; the others had places in the charge according to the speed they could get out of their mounts. Not one hung back. At the foot of the hill, Hay reached the rear of the Virginians, and, firing first, hurled his rifle; then, pistol in hand, he lunged Silver-heels in. But presently the ground turned into an out-spreading level, and the advantages melting away, he found himself surrounded and a target for well-aimed sabres. He took one wound; then another; but for each of them he killed a man. When the revolver was empty, he flung it at the Confederate captain, and engaged him with his bayonet. A third wound; yet he kept his saddle. Half-blind with blood, and striking aimlessly, he had certainly been finished had not Farley rushed loyally to his aid. A fortunate shot struck the captain. Farley, dismounted by the collision, followed him to the ground. Then, before he could gain his feet, a man clinched him only to be knocked senseless by young Hallowell. Farley caught a horse and joined Hay again. About that time the Virginians, bareback, and in their flight, took to the railroad track. Over the ties, amid a thick dust of

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

cinders, helter-skelter, each man for himself, they went headlong. Suddenly a burned culvert of depth and width yawned before them. Avoid it they could not; into it or over it they had to go. Eight men died there, and Hay would have been the ninth man but that he saw the obstruction and, as the only chance for life, took the leap. The horse fell dead on the farther side. When his comrades reached Hay, they found him sitting by Silver-heels, and crying, "He was not hurt, boys; his heart broke—that's all"; and that he always maintained.

The combat ended at the culvert; so, at least, Hay supposed; and the Zouaves employed themselves collecting the spoils. They first secured seventeen horses, with their equipments; then, going over the ground of combat, they counted eleven of the Virginians dead, three in the road at the foot of the fatal hill, and eight in the débris of the culvert.

Hay selected a successor to Silver-heels, after which, with much self-gratulation, light-hearted, and joking, the party set out for Cumberland. Soon, from loss of blood, the corporal grew so faint they had to stop and help him out of his saddle. They dressed his wounds again; still he had difficulty in riding. As a last resort, two of their number—Baker of Company A and Dunlap of Company I—were sent to a farm-house for a wagon. All this took valuable time. The sun rose up and stood above them at noon. Two o'clock, and they were yet helping Hay, and waiting for the wagon. Suddenly a fire opened upon them from a hill at their left. Hay had them put him on his horse; he could take care of himself, he said; and clinging painfully to the saddle, he managed to ford the Potomac and get to camp after night.

Though reduced now to ten men, most likely the whole of them had been saved could they have made



up their minds to let the captured horses go. Years before Farley had lost one of his eyes; the sound one now served him well. He saw the Virginians were surrounding them. Behind him he beheld the glancing waters of Patterson's creek, and noted that the farther side of it, while scarcely higher than the ground they were then upon, was covered with large rocks washed white by passing floods. There were willows in clump also, and a general débris of logs and drift furnishing cover and concealment.

"Let the horses go," he called out; "let them go, and come in every one of you." And when they were all assembled, he sang out again: "It won't do to give in or stay here. Come, now, and let's rush for the big rocks yonder, and get the creek between the rebels and us."

They made the rush and reached the other shore of the creek. Farley looked them over. They were all there—ten of them—and in his words they were "sound as new fifty-cent pieces, and not whipped by a damned sight."

In the shelter of the logs and rocks, they counted over seventy Virginians afoot and running for the creek.

"Look out now, boys, and don't waste a cartridge. Remember how scarce they are." This was from Farley, and Hallowell replied, "Yes, and 'Remember Buena Vista.'"

As the enemy took the creek, splashing furiously, the rifles on the island all opened upon them, making the air hot and hissing. Some were hit; all who could recoiled, and, taking cover on their side, they began the exciting play of sharp-shooters, which was still in progress when the sun went down.

In the deepening of the twilight a party of horsemen were seen to join the Virginians. One of them, a tall man with a plumed, broad-brimmed hat, walked



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

about in contempt of the bullets that sang about him. He took command, and under his inspiration the whole assembly of foemen arose, and, yelling, made another dash to cross the creek. Some of them were seen to fall in the water; but now there was a resolute, fearless leader and no recoil. They reached the island. No amount of courage was then available, so great was the odds in close quarters; yet over the bowlders, and through the tangle of logs and willows, a fight, hand to hand, went on, and there was heroism on both sides. Farley found himself confronting the tall leader, he of the broad-brimmed, plumed hat. The sword-bayonet in his hand was good, but the sabre of the other was better, and Hallowell saved Farley, but broke his rifle in the act. Nothing daunted, Hallowell stripped a dead man of his pistols in belt and resumed the combat. He brought the pistols into camp with him, and next morning I made him a present of them. Thomas killed two opponents with his rifle; while loading a third time, a bullet raked his temple and he fell senseless. A man in gray lifted a sabre to finish him, but was shot by Grover, and fell across the body of Thomas and died. In the darkness, when night was fallen, Thomas recovered consciousness; hearing no sound, he pushed the corpse off, secured his gun, and was in hiding when the enemy came to remove their dead and wounded. In searching the island, they discovered Hollenback shot through the body.

"Here's a Yankee," Thomas heard one of them shout.

"Come, my man, get out of this," another said; yet others cried, "Kill him, kill him!"

The poor fellow protested feebly; yet they made him rise and wade the creek. When they were gone with their prisoner, and all was still, Thomas escaped across the Potomac.

Meantime, Baker, and Dunlap of Company I, the two sent for the wagon, hearing the noise of the second engagement, turned their horses and galloped to camp. The regiment was at drill when they arrived. Two companies, under Major Robinson, started to the rescue, but though they travelled fast they were too late. The island was given over to darkness and quiet. They found traces of the fight in abundance—broken guns, accoutrements, and blood in red stains on the rocks—but that was all.

Next morning the major went back with the companies to search for Hollenback, and bury such dead as they might find. He returned with eight horses, and the body of the missing scout found on a farmer's porch warm and bleeding. The poor fellow had died of a bullet and bayonet thrust in his back. The major also brought me the story of the woman of the house.

"A little while ago," she said, "when they heard you coming, they set your man on a horse to take him off with them, for he wasn't dead. But he couldn't stand it, and fainted. They then stuck a bayonet through him."

"Did they bring anybody else here?" the major asked, seeing blood in spots in the porch.

"Oh yes," she said. "Me and my man came out while they were at work, and we counted twenty-three men laid out there side by side. Two or three of them were alive. I heard a man say that some of the dead ones had been brought out by the railroad. Among the lot there was a Mr. Ashby wounded."<sup>1</sup>

By "taps" the scouts, with the one exception, were all in camp. Thomas showed the furrow of the shot

<sup>1</sup> The Ashby referred to by the woman was reported to be a brother of the Ashby of "Black Horse Cavalry" renown. It was also reported that he afterwards died of the wounds received at Patterson's creek.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

across his temple. Baker wore the cap of a Virginian—his own having been torn from his head. Dunlap, of Company K, had three bullet holes through his jacket and shirt. Hallowell displayed his pistols. Farley retained the handle of his bayonet shivered in the fray. Every one bore some proof of danger run, if only a bruised body or torn clothes. Withal, however, Corporal Hay was the hero. Three ghastly wounds entitled him to the honor.<sup>1</sup>

The second fight of that day took place, as it afterwards appeared, on Kelly's Island, at the mouth of Patterson's creek. Hollenback was buried in the cemetery of Cumberland. The loyal people of the city, men and women, participated in the funeral. The feeling on our side was prodigious; what it was on the other side may be imagined.

Such was the combat at Kelly's Island. I think it would have attracted attention at any period of the war; but coming as it did in the very beginning, the whole North accepted it as a test of personal prowess referable particularly to the boast then so common, that in a fight one Southerner was the equal of five Yankees. Certainly the largesse of encomiums from headquarters and high places, and from the press, was liberal enough to satisfy any ambition.

General Patterson, upon receipt of my report of the affair, issued an order to be read to every command in his army.

“(General Orders No. 29.)

“HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA,  
“HAGERSTOWN, *June 30, 1861.*

“The commanding general has the satisfaction to announce to the troops a second victory over the insurgents

<sup>1</sup> Upon my recommendation, Governor Morton afterwards appointed Hay a second lieutenant.

## LEW WALLACE

by a small party of Indiana Volunteers, under Colonel Wallace, on the 26th instant. Thirteen mounted men attached to the regiment attacked forty-one insurgents, killing eight and chasing the rest two miles. On their return with seventeen captured horses, they were attacked by seventy-five of the enemy, and fell back to a strong position, which they held till dark, when they returned to camp, with the loss of one man killed and one wounded.

"The commanding general desires to bring to the attention of the officers and men of his command the courage and conduct with which this gallant little band of comparatively raw troops met the emergency, by turning on an enemy so largely superior in numbers and chastising him severely, and gathering the fruits of victory.

"By order of Major-General Patterson.

"J. F. PORTER, Assistant Adjutant-General."

The day after the fight, General McClellan telegraphed me for the particulars, and to my reply he sent the following:

"GRAFTON, VA., June 28, 1861.

"*To Colonel Lew Wallace:*

"I congratulate you upon the gallant conduct of your regiment. Thank them for me, and express to the party how highly I honor their heroic courage, worthy of their French namesakes. I more than ever regret that you are not under my command. I have urged General Scott to send up the Pennsylvania regiments. I begin to doubt if the Eleventh Indiana needs reinforcements.

"GEORGE B. MCCLELLAN, Major-General, U. S. Army."

Nor was that all. The gallantry at Kelly's Island had an echo in the marble chamber of the vice-president in the Capitol, and another in the White House. Mr. Colfax was pleased to write me:



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“WASHINGTON CITY, *June 28, 1861.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—The whole city is ringing with the magnificent news from your scouting party, though it seems too splendid to be true. We had been all depressed by another slight reverse on the Potomac line to-day when in came the rumor of your despatch to General McClellan, said to be telegraphed verbatim to General Scott. Indians, I need not tell you, feel prouder than ever of our volunteers, and I only hope it may be confirmed. The president told me day before yesterday that Indiana had won nearly all the glory so far, and taken about all the scalps. But this news eclipses everything. If it really be true, please present to the gallant boys the heartiest thanks of the Indianians here, especially of

“Yours and theirs very truly,

“SCHUYLER COLFAX.

“P. S.—The president, in his conversation with me, alluded especially to your splendid dash on Romney.”

## XXXV

Ordered to Martinsburg—Joe Johnston and Beauregard—Arrival of baggage-train—Meeting with Patterson—Mexican War reminiscences—Fitz-John Porter—Colonel Stone—The rivalry of the Massachusetts regiment—A competitive drill.

ABOUT eleven o'clock in the forenoon of July 7th, as nearly as I can remember, a special courier dismounted at the door of my tent and delivered a sealed despatch from General Patterson. Opening it, I took out an order directing me to march to Martinsburg as soon as possible.

"As soon as possible," was the postfix. As always upon the receipt of orders, my wits put themselves to work trying to discover the whys and wherefores governing in the quarters from which this one proceeded.

From the courier, and from general information as well, I knew an army was being massed at Martinsburg. I knew, also, that General Beauregard was in force at Manassas Junction, and that there was talk—much too loud, it seemed to me—of attacking him from Washington. I knew, too, that General Joe Johnston held Winchester with another army; and putting this and that together, the inference was plain that the concentration at Martinsburg had in some way to do with Johnston. A little study of the map, and it grew upon me that General Patterson was in position materially to assist the authorities in Washington when it should be decided to take the offensive against Beauregard. Thereupon the old itching to see a battle, a real big

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

battle, with thousands engaged, surged back on me with even more than its original force. The keeping of Cumberland, personally useful in that it had called my resources into play, was but guerilla after all. A broader field, and relations with other commands, were within the longings now aroused; and I could but think what education there must be in the co-operation of a great army.

I made haste, yet it took the day to call in my scouts and, I may add, to allow farewells to friends in the city whose alarm ran high. If they were to be left without protection now, they thought it had been better had I not come. Fortunately for them, and my own peace of mind, Colonel Biddle, with his "Bucktails," crossed into Maryland to take my place. Governor Curtin had at last realized that the condition was war, in which state lines were to become myths more unsubstantial than flying gossamers.

My few sick were left in hospital, where, thanks to the good people, I knew they would be better cared for than on the march or in the field. With everything in wagon we took the road to Martinsburg.

The Potomac, when reached, had ceased to be a subject of remark to the regiment. Familiarity had done its work, and we took to the river and waded it in a matter-of-fact way.

Approaching Martinsburg, I noticed crowds of men in uniforms lining the road-sides, and as they received us with clapping of hands and loud laughter, I asked one of them what it meant.

"Oh," he returned, "we heard of your train, and we are out to see it. It's great, colonel, it's great!"

And it was great. Nothing like it of the kind had been seen. It came on composed of every conceivable wheeled vehicle, from one-horse chaises of Holmes's sort

## LEW WALLACE

to "prairie-schooners," sixty-two in all. It rolled on slowly and solemnly, and with all manner of original noises.

"What do you carry in them?" one asked me.

"Regimental property, to be sure."

"Well, you must have struck a good quartermaster in Romney."

No person in authority presenting himself to direct me to a place of encampment, I held on the main road till a roomy stubble-field invited me to come in, and I entered and took possession and discharged my teamsters, giving each one a quartermaster's certificate covering the use of his property. Thereupon we pitched our tents, and were installed as a part of an army indefinitely large.

General Patterson, to whose headquarters I immediately rode to report my arrival, was glad to see me, and had much to say that was complimentary. In course of the conversation I referred to the Mexican War, and asked him if he were not the officer who, in 1846, had ordered Colonel Drake, of the First Indiana, up to Monterey. He remembered the circumstance, and said he knew at the time that his action was without authority, and that he had misgivings about the treatment the regiment would get from General Taylor; still, he added, it was a venture with humanity at bottom, for such a want of wholesome food, such helplessness in suffering, such wholesale dying he had never thought to see in an American camp. While he was speaking I was struck with his likeness to General Taylor; only his countenance was not so densely stupid, while his uniform was in accord with his rank, and he wore blacked boots and a clean shirt.

The general introduced me to a number of his officers. One of them, Colonel Abercrombie, spoke of my father as a classmate at West Point. I listened to him with



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

greater interest, knowing that it was he who won the recent skirmish at Falling Waters. For the same reason my pleasure was very sincere when told of my assignment to his brigade.

Colonel Fitz-John Porter, assistant adjutant-general, also honored me with a glance. I remember him as carefully attired, reserved in manner, quick in observation, graceful in person; in other words, looking the fine soldier. It struck me, too, that my Zouave jacket and breeches, by that time considerably worse of the wear, did not recommend me to him.

There, also, I met Colonel Stone, leader of a brigade. His open countenance, kindly voice, and hearty manner were singularly attractive. In his presence it had been impossible to forecast the misfortunes that befell him, stripped of command, and shut in a prison—for what, no man to this day has said. Nor did he know. Years after I met him in Egypt, the first general in the service of the Khedive. In Shepheard's Hotel one night he discussed his tribulations in America, and asserted, his eyes moist with tears, that he had no knowledge of a cause for them; neither did he know who his enemy was. He was even denied a court of inquiry. Indeed, his case is the one mystery of the war awaiting solution. Ever since that melancholy night I have had a conviction that General Stone was guiltless of any military crime—that he was simply the victim of some superior's spleen or jealousy.

Of all those met that day at General Patterson's headquarters, none impressed me as did George H. Thomas, then colonel commanding a brigade. He sat at a table the moment of my introduction, but arose and offered me his hand. His full, knightly figure and leonine face somehow told me of the soldierly soul of the man. The next time I met him was in the office

of a station in Tennessee on the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. The promise of the early meeting in Martinsburg had been more than realized; he had developed into the best beloved of the Western army.

The division commanders under General Patterson—Major-Generals Cadwallader and Keim—I had not the good-fortune of seeing then or ever.

Returning to camp in the afternoon, I found the regiment in commotion. The men were sullen and angry. Some of them, it appeared, had climbed a fence across the road to watch another regiment at drill, but had been ordered down and off; the order had been seasoned with expletives, and sundry unqualified allusions to “damned Indiana grease-bags.” A detachment had told itself off to resent the insult, and was then in the road waiting for the strangers to appear.

Here was an opportunity for a serious regimental feud, if not something worse, and I hastened to direct the officers of the day to stop the going out, and if any were out to bring them in. Thereupon I rode to see the offending body, which was yet at drill.

It was a Massachusetts regiment. One had only to glance at it to see how raw the organization was, and at the same time how beautifully it had been fitted out—thanks to the loving care of Governor Andrews. The uniforms were fresh; the tents immaculately white, and pitched with a precision certifying a master colonel, whoever he might be. The blue wagons in park, and the fatted mules about them, were all in keeping with their surroundings. Glancing at the band, however, one knew he had come upon the colonel’s chief joy. Their horns in especial looked as if they had been made where brass was an original product, flowing like a river. Small wonder these petted sons of the old Bay State elevated their noses so airily at us.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I had not to be told that my neighbors, the officers in particular, held views of the West colored with uncomplimentary prejudices, and I thought it possible to revolutionize them at least so far as we were concerned. We had only to show them that we could teach them something, and I had an inspiration—they may have seen a company of Zouaves at drill, but not a full regiment.

Next day, in the afternoon, the band of my colleague from Massachusetts sounded the adjutant's call; mine did the same. His companies poured from their streets; so did mine. The idlers of the army assembled in force. Expecting nothing from us, they lent the inspiration of their presence to my neighbor, and were not ordered down and off. He broke into column; at the same time all my bugles sounded. As an excitant the rush of eight hundred vigorous men hither and thither in all the variations of manœuvre must be seen to be appreciated. First, the idlers came over to my fence. Next, a New York regiment in hearing hurried to us. Then the howling of our rivals in the opposite field rose into a gale often as their columns wheeled in marching so as to give us their backs, and I knew what that meant. My confidence increased.

Our field was bounded on the north by a rail fence; beyond the fence stretched a broad hollow; and beyond the hollow a low mountain arose covered to the top with a growth of scrubby pine-trees. Watching a time when the whole column of my unwilling friends over the way was marching from us, suddenly, every bugle sounding, I brought the Eleventh into line facing the mountain. Another blast, and away they went, making the rails fly—away down the hither face of the hollow, across the hollow, up the ascent then in their front reaching a quarter of a mile—up every step double-

## LEW WALLACE

quick. At length the last man of them disappeared in the pines. Three minutes—five—ten—then the uninitiated on the fences were all hushed by the same wonder—how was I, on my horse in the field, to bring the regiment back? It was the supreme moment of my venture. I looked at my neighbor. The curiosity of his companies becoming ungovernable, he had brought them to a halt, faced my way. My bugler, taking the signal from me, blew "Retreat"; another, several hundred yards off in the hollow, repeated it; others up in the grove did the same. In good time the regiment, intervals kept and in fair line, and still in double time, burst into view descending the height. The waving of caps and the yelling with which they were greeted from the fences assured me, and I looked over at Massachusetts. They, too, were cheering in generous fashion. They had surrendered.

Across the hollow, over the fence, into the field, the well-doers came as they had gone; suddenly the bugle gave them "Lie down," and they dropped as one man in the stubble.

Fraternization of the men of the two regiments began at once. Next day my neighbors, the officers, did us the honor to call. Next day, also, a wagon passed into my lines bringing half a dozen boxes of tobacco, with the compliments of Daniel Butterfield, colonel of the Twelfth New York. After that, in a word, there were no lines in the army against the Eleventh Indiana.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XXXVI

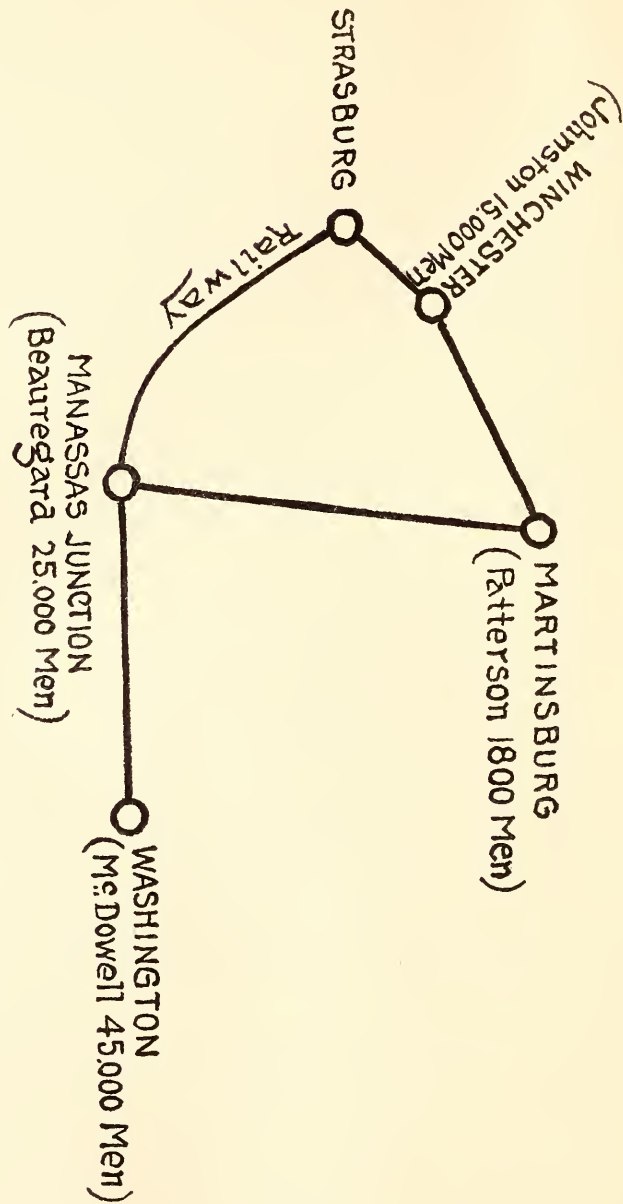
General Scott in command—Johnston at Harper's Ferry—Beauregard at Bull Run—Diagram—General Patterson's operations—The movement on Manassas—The Eleventh Regiment's willingness to remain beyond term of enlistment—Its return to Indianapolis.

At this time, it may be remembered, Lieutenant-General Scott was directing military affairs from Washington. When his acceptance of President Lincoln's call to command was announced the whole North felt relieved. Congratulations poured in upon him, but he had no time to answer them. The situation was too urgent. General Joe Johnston, with four thousand men, was in possession of Harper's Ferry, while General Beauregard menaced Washington from intrenchments along Bull Run. Drawing upon his vast experience, the veteran hurried to assemble protecting armies—one at Washington, another in Pennsylvania. Too infirm to mount a horse, he selected General Irvin McDowell to command the first and General Robert Patterson the second.

Busy days and sleepless nights were those for the old soldier, charged with the harassing labor of organization, and every moment in mortal concern for the colossal reputation behind him. Turning from the reports of quartermasters, commissaries, ordnance officers, and inspectors, which could not be passed, he gave his best thought to the map disclosing the positions of the armies relative to Washington; and just so often the

## LEW WALLACE

diagram of an irregular triangle shaped itself under his dimming eyes.



Washington was for the time the focus of all movement and all anxiety. When, finally, General Scott thought himself ready to give McDowell the word to

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

advance against Beauregard, there was but one point about which he had misgivings; that is, he was certain of success if—and how long, if not nervously, the condition was pondered—if only Johnston could be held fast at Winchester.

Beginning with a perfect appreciation of the danger did Johnston appear on the field while the struggle was in progress, General Scott could not fail to see that either Johnston must be detained at Winchester or Patterson brought down to McDowell. I can imagine him weighing the chances. Often as he put his compasses on the map, the diagram fashioned itself before him; then he could not fail to see that Johnston at Winchester had the inner line against Patterson at Martinsburg, the railroad from Strasburg being such a factor. In short, the advantages were with Johnston. Still, Congress demanded a battle; so did the newspapers; so did the loyal people everywhere. Accordingly, the day being fixed, General Scott by telegraph sent General Patterson a final order, dated July 13th —“Make *demonstrations* so as to detain him (Johnston) in the *valley of Winchester*.”<sup>1</sup> The end aimed at is stated together with the means of accomplishing it.

Now, a grave difference afterwards arose between General Scott and General Patterson touching the latter's operations under the order. I do not wish to be understood as the partisan of either; both have my profoundest respect; at the same time there ought to be no objection to a statement of the *demonstration* actually made by General Patterson in so far at least as it fell under my personal observation—I a participant. By going then to what General Johnston did, it is possible

<sup>1</sup> The italics are mine.

to discover the real secret of the loss to the Union arms of the battle of Manassas.

The order for General Patterson's movements bore date of July 13th. In the afternoon of the 14th I was notified that the army at Martinsburg would be put in motion the next day, and that I was to be ready to take my place in the column.

On the 15th the army started, Colonel Abercrombie, if I remember rightly, in advance. Where were we going? Everybody asked; nobody answered. The weather was intensely hot and dry, and the dust from the feet of the tramping thousands rose like an ochreous cloud. Noon, and still we marched, halting about three o'clock. Were we to go into camp? Colonel Abercrombie at length arrived and told me to dispose my regiment so as to make the men comfortable as might be, regardless of a probable alarm in the night. "We are at Bunker Hill," he said, "six miles from Winchester, and we will bivouac here." We had marched fifteen miles.

While coffee was making, I amused myself going from fire to fire listening to the comments of the men. They believed Winchester our destination, and that there, or on the road, we would have a big fight to tell about when back in Indiana. And I was of the same belief.

The situation was as novel to me as to them. Before retiring to my blanket, I wrote a letter to be taken to my dear wife, a farewell to her should the ultimate happen to me next day.<sup>1</sup> That there would be a battle I had not a doubt.

<sup>1</sup> Having some curiosity to see the letter after so long a time, I recently looked it up, and was not ashamed of the spirit in which it was written. Without being in the least gloomy, it shows a proper understanding of the possibilities confronting me, coupled with a willingness to face them. My wife, it should be said, has scrap-books always at my service. I sometimes think they contain everything I ever did or said.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

It was a July sun, nothing diminished, that arose next day over the world, of which Bunker Hill, in Virginia, was now the centre. I was up to see it rise. The overhanging dust deepened in color to a brick red. Close behind, their muskets in stack, the men made coffee and lounged about waiting in momentary expectation of the familiar "Fall in"; but noon followed the morning, and evening the noon, and it was still quiet at Bunker Hill, in Virginia, only six miles from Winchester. In a fit of impatience, I grew presumptuous and rode to headquarters. Everything, they told me there, was hanging on the result of a reconnoissance in progress. Then my interest centred in the reconnoissance, it being, I was given to understand, strong enough in all the arms at least to get one look at the church spires of the town over against us. In the afternoon, towards sunset, it returned, reporting, as I was informed, that the road at some point near or far was obstructed by felled trees. Of all the officers in command brought back nothing was more certain than that he had not fired a gun; neither had he been fired at or seen an earthwork; had there been exchange of shotted courtesies we were near enough to have heard it.

Thus the 16th passed. I spent the night on the picket-line across the main road about four and a half miles from Winchester.

My field-officer lay with me under a tree. A calmer summer night could not have been. Our attention was forward in the direction of the enemy; and several times in the slow-going, long night we heard, or fancied we heard, in the universal stillness, trains in motion on the Manassas Gap railroad at Strasburg, eighteen miles beyond Winchester; we even thought we could distinguish between the sharp rattle of trains *coming* empty and the half-thunderous rumble of trains going laden. Was

the enemy evacuating Winchester? Might he not be using his railroad, the complement of his interior line, to rush his army to the support of Beauregard at Manassas? In the oppressive silence we debated the question. Upon reporting in the morning, I suggested the possibility at brigade headquarters. The idea was met with a smile. *Now* it is known that the trains we fancied hearing in the calm night resonant afar were arriving to take Johnston's infantry and carry them at speed to Manassas, while his cavalry and artillery marched overland.

It should be said that my knowledge of the general military situation, what time I arrived at Martinsburg, including the status at Washington, Manassas, and Winchester, was from the source from which the enemy had his intelligence—the newspapers. That General Patterson supposed himself limited to mere *demonstration* I did not know; so, thinking he was out for a battle with General Johnston, the reader can judge my surprise when, at five o'clock in the morning of the 17th, the army was again deployed into a great column and set in motion towards Charlestown, where it went into bivouac sixteen or eighteen miles from Winchester. The movement had appearances of a retreat. Besides a heavy rear-guard, the main body was secured from surprise by flankers. Once there was a false alarm attended by a hurried closing up and forming for action.

Such being the end of the *demonstration* by General Patterson, in compliance with General Scott's order of the 13th, the effect may be tried in the light of subsequent history.

On the 16th—the day General Patterson spent in bivouac at Bunker Hill—General McDowell's army left Washington and marched to Centreville,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

On the 17th the enemy at Centreville drew back to Bull Run, and General Scott telegraphed General Patterson: "McDowell's first day's work has driven the enemy behind Fairfax Court-House. Do not let the enemy amuse and delay you with a small force while he reinforces the junction with his main body." General Patterson replied, asking, "Shall I attack?" General Scott answered the same day: "I have certainly been expecting you to beat the enemy, or that you at least had occupied him by threats and demonstrations. . . . Has he not stolen a march, and sent reinforcements towards Manassas Junction?"<sup>1</sup> General Patterson replied: "The enemy has not stolen a march upon me. I have caused him to be reinforced."<sup>2</sup> Later in the day he added, "I have succeeded in accordance with the wishes of the general-in-chief in keeping General Johnston's force at Winchester."<sup>3</sup> The same day—the 17th—General Patterson, at four o'clock in the morning, roused his army from slumber, and retired with it from Bunker Hill to Charlestown. Most remarkable, however, while General Patterson was forwarding the last telegram quoted to General Scott, General Johnston, having made all ready, started — had advanced from Winchester to Manassas.<sup>4</sup>

On the 18th—General Patterson at Charlestown in absolute tranquillity sixteen miles from Winchester—General Tyler, against orders, was making the reconnoissance from Centreville that brought on the skirmish dignified by the Confederates into the battle of Bull Run, and General Johnson was en route with the larger part of his army.

On the 20th — General Patterson still in peaceful bivouac at Charlestown—General Johnston joined

<sup>1</sup> *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. i., pp. 182-183.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



forces with Beauregard at Manassas. With eight thousand three hundred and forty men and twenty guns, he took position on the left of the Confederate army.<sup>1</sup>

On the 21st General McDowell, ignorant of General Johnston's presence on the field, attacked the left of Beauregard's position, and was repulsed by Johnston; and all through the terrible hours of that dark day General Patterson was quietly marching from Charlestown to Harper's Ferry, twelve miles farther from Winchester. One cannot help reverting to the assurance Scott gave McDowell, "that Johnston should not join Beauregard without having Patterson on his heels."<sup>2</sup>

I must be excused now from comment, leaving the facts recited to speak for themselves. Somebody blundered. That General Patterson did not follow at Johnston's heels had been excused on the ground that the term of enlistment of eighteen of his volunteer regiments was to expire within seven days, which would have been on the 24th.<sup>3</sup> The plea is not without force.

At Charlestown General Patterson issued an appeal to his command, representing the great necessity for its continuing with him ten days longer; in that time, he said, other troops would arrive. The question of staying was put to the regiments each in its quarters. Two consented—two only—the Second Wisconsin and the Eleventh Indiana. There were no other Western organizations in General Patterson's army.

Colonel Starkweather and I were so well pleased that, after the voting, we marched our men ceremonially to

<sup>1</sup> Beauregard, in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> General J. B. Fry, in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, vol. i., p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> *Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1861*. W. W. H. Davis.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the gate in front of the general's house and, halting there, notified him of the action taken. The old soldier came out and made a complimentary speech to us. While he was speaking, three of the regiments from his own state, Pennsylvania, marched past us going home. Their loud fanfaronade must have stung the speaker to the quick. I have never heard that the two consenting regiments were by name accredited for their patriotic stand.

The return home from Harper's Ferry was without incident. On July 29th the regiment arrived at Indianapolis, where it was handsomely received by the governor and the city. On August 2d the formal muster out took place, and the three months' service was at an end. Besides valuable experience acquired, we had availed ourselves of every opportunity to advance the cause.

## XXXVII

The Eleventh Indiana—Its character—Tribute to General McGinnis.

WITH few exceptions the men of the Eleventh Indiana, in the three months' service, were in what may be called the efflorescent period of life; insomuch, in fact, that they had their regimental character largely from their buoyancy of youth. While appreciating the horrors which, by universal consent, make battles terrible, they yet had a pronounced anxiety to try them experimentally. They were of such varied occupations that it had been possible, I believe, to have overcome every difficulty ordinarily incident to soldiers in campaign. Indeed, I used to think that if transported in the remotest inhabitable part of the globe, where everything called for by civilization was in the raw, they could have taken care of themselves even to the making an acceptable state.

As respects the officers, their zeal was great as mine, while as drill-masters some of them were unexcelled. Foreseeing a demand upon my ranks to fill positions in other commands, I decided early not to try to keep any one who thought he could better himself by going elsewhere. The principle, however, did not apply to the officers, and, doing my best to retain them, I happily succeeded. They all proved themselves under the new enlistment worthy the most honorable mention; at the same time there was one for whom all the rest would have given way, and of him I must speak with particularity, if only to please myself.

Lieutenant-Colonel George F. McGinnis was a soldier

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by nature. Added to the other indispensable qualities, he was master of the tactics then in usage. Stern and insistent where orders were concerned, he somehow managed to get the love of the men and hold it; wherefore the soubriquet, "Pap McGinnis." He had a horse, of course, but hated a saddle, taking to it only in battle. I can see him yet marching, a tall, ruddy, angular-looking person, swinging forward loose-gaited at the head of the column, his sabre tucked point foremost under his arm. At such times he had little to say. He gave step to the company next him, and the "pony" lads at the rear, troubled to keep up, showered him with blessings strangely mixed considering how every one of them would have died for him.

His promotions were rapid—from a private in the Eleventh to a captaincy; next lieutenant-colonel; then colonel; finally, in May, 1863, he was commissioned brigadier-general. As colonel he took part in the capture of Fort Heiman, opposite Fort Henry, and in the fall of Fort Donelson, and at Shiloh and the siege of Corinth. As chief of the First Brigade of the Third Division of the 13th Army Corps, he shared in all the honors of the Vicksburg campaign, including the battle of Port Hudson and Champion Hills. At the latter he was conspicuous, his brigade bearing the brunt and losing heavily, the casualties of the Eleventh Indiana alone amounting to one hundred and sixty-seven. Returning to Indianapolis, with two enlistments in the Mexican War and two in the civil war to his credit, the people of the county recognized the sterling qualities of the man by electing him auditor and then commissioner. He is still living. I meet him frequently, and always with feelings in which the fraternal surpasses the friendly.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He is at present [1901] postmaster of the city of Indianapolis.

## XXXVIII

Eleventh regiment re-enlists for three years—Invited to join McClellan's command—Goes to St. Louis with Frémont—Headquarters—Inactivity—Cold reception—Transferred to Smith's division—Paducah.

THE ten days' overstay with General Patterson in Virginia threw the Eleventh Indiana behind in recruiting; nevertheless, it was mustered-in for three years on August 31, 1861. Then the question of lively interest to us all—where would we be sent?

General McClellan, attracted by our conduct while at Cumberland, had invited me to join him in the event of continuation in the service, and I confess to having been greatly flattered, for he was the genius then almost unanimously supposed to have been divinely appointed to save the republic. Everybody in the North spoke of him as the young Napoleon. By this time he was in Washington, called thither by Mr. Lincoln the day succeeding the disaster to McDowell at Manassas. Leaving my regiment to proceed to Indianapolis, I ran up to make the general's acquaintance and study the situation. He met me politely, and renewed the invitation. Two days, however, served to satisfy me that a Western regiment was out of place in an army exclusively Eastern, and I answered his overture, saying that unless he ordered otherwise I should stay in the West.

When, after the muster-in, I looked over the company rolls, to my surprise and pleasure comparatively few of the three months' men had gone to other com-



mands. This left me all the better prepared for immediate orders, and on September 6th the regiment was in march to report to Major-General John C. Frémont, at St. Louis, Missouri.

The newspapers had kept me posted as to events in Missouri. With the story of Nathaniel Lyon I was familiar. Perhaps the remark may be allowed, that to my mind he has not received from his countrymen the meed he deserved. To the salvation of St. Louis, he added the victories of Dug Springs and Wilson's Creek, and then death in the midst of victory.

In the latter part of July, John Charles Frémont made his advent in St. Louis. There had been created for him a special command territorially so vast as to be of itself a temptation to a weak man. If his Western department had an eastern boundary, westwardly it was in a sense limitless. Lyon and Sigel—the latter another willing fighter—were still in the field; but he had thrown them measurably upon their own resources. Not a man or a gun went to their reinforcement. At Wilson's Creek they had fought twenty-three thousand Confederates, under General Price, with a patriot force not exceeding five thousand. True, Frémont garrisoned Cairo and partially fortified St. Louis; but the achievements seemed to have exhausted him for military performances, and he surrendered himself to politics. Ignoring a general government in Washington, he assumed dictatorial control of his department, took possession of public moneys, levied forced loans on what he apologetically called secession banks, and gathered about him a staff disproportionate in numbers, if not of his own choosing. Outside a coterie of devotees thronging the reception-room of his luxurious headquarters, everybody looked his way suspiciously, if not in dread. There were brave men in his *entourage* anx-

ious to be doing, but they were without influence. He appeared busy; unfortunately, nobody could tell what about. President Lincoln—to Frémont unknown—was absorbed in conditions pertaining to Washington, especially in the organization of a sufficient army. His attention had not yet swung round to affairs west of the Mississippi, and he confided in Frémont, and at first smiled at the warnings of the press of the country sounded daily in his ears. Indeed, what with Frémont's Western department of vast and shadowy frontiers, and the unhindered will permitted that officer, no such opportunity to set up an independency of some kind had offered itself since Aaron Burr's days of mystery.<sup>1</sup>

Of much of this, particularly of General Frémont's management, I knew at the time but little. Rumors of the extravagance of some of his officers were in airing by the press, but I had not been called to investigate them. He himself was in alarm, excited by the operations of General Price, Ben McCulloch, and a devastating horde of Indians and Texans nearly as uncivilized, and his cries for troops were abroad in the land. I heard them, and, thinking they presaged immediate service in the field, requested Governor Morton to have me ordered to Missouri.

Upon arriving at St. Louis, about September 8th or 10th, my regiment was quartered in the shed barracks

<sup>1</sup> On August 31st, General Frémont proclaimed martial law throughout Missouri, and that all persons within certain defined lines taken with arms in their hands should be shot, and that the property, real and personal, of all persons in Missouri found guilty of taking an active part with the enemies of the government in the field, should be confiscated to the public use, and their slaves, if they had any, should be thereafter free men.—Lossing's *Civil War*, vol. ii., p. 64. This was usurpation, and Mr. Lincoln modified the order by revoking the parts pertaining to confiscation of property and the liberation of slaves. The time for emancipation had not come, and he reserved the act for his own hand.

said to have been erected by General Curtis. They were out in the purlieus and dirty and uncomfortable, yet they were accepted without grumble. Next day about nine o'clock I rode to town with a formal morning report in my pocket, intending, after delivering it to the adjutant-general, to pay my respects to the general commanding. Perhaps he might give me a hint as to when and where he would march me. Anyhow, a little politeness to the great man would do no harm. I might as well confess, too, that my curiosity to see him was quite lively. He was the great "Pathfinder," and had been a candidate for the presidency.

Finding headquarters was easy to the stranger. Everybody seemed to know where it was. I found it in a three-story house with a front, as I now recollect, flush with the street, and of elegance—the residence of a Colonel Brant. At the curbing a lot of horses were in care of orderlies. I was struck with the freshness of the saddle furniture, all strictly *réglementaire*. Dismounting, I looked for some one to come and take my bridle also; but no. Finally, I remounted, and rode along the street till I found a negro who was glad to serve me as orderly for a quarter. A sentinel at the door halted me to find out who I was. Admitted presently to a spacious room somewhat crowded with officers apparently in waiting, nobody received me or so much as noticed my presence. The opportunity to study the gentlemen in attendance was good. They were all in uniform, fine-looking, nice, very polite and sociable to one another, and without show of business; from which I inferred they were of the staff proper. All eyes, I observed, were watchful of a door connecting, it seemed, with another room, probably the adjutant-general's office. Pretty soon I caught myself attracted by the same door. An unarmed sentinel kept it, whereat I wondered. In



the company there was one individual, slender-waisted, graceful-looking, young, and dressed in flaming scarlet from head to foot. He drew my attention; if I was going unnoticed, so was he. He spoke to no one; no one spoke to him. Lonesomeness is contagious. In that brief time I caught the feeling from him. Growing irritated at length, I summoned my courage, and singling out one officer whose countenance seemed a little chastened with charity for the meek and humble, I asked him if General Frémont was in. He looked me over—I was not in Zouave dress—and said “yes.” Could I see him? He pointed to the sentinel, whom I approached, putting the same question and getting the same answer. “Could I see the general?” “Your name,” he asked. I gave it to him, and he disappeared through the door, but returned soon to say:

“The general is too busy. Come again.”

Not liking to be put off so summarily, I argued, “I am here to report the arrival of my regiment.”

“Come again,” he answered.

There was nothing else for me. Thinking if such were the awesome state outside headquarters, how overwhelming that pervading the inside must be, I started out, angry to my inmost being. At the door of exit I saw the young fellow in scarlet again. Curiosity getting the better of me, I pulled the sleeve of an officer near by, and asked, “Who is he?” The interrogated told me —“He? Oh, that is a Bulgarian! Hearing of our war, he came over with letters, and offered his services. Stanton (secretary of war), not knowing what to do with him, took him at his word, sent him out here to report to General Frémont, and he is now on the staff. He can’t speak a word of English.”

“How does he get along?” I asked.

“Heaven only knows,” was the reply. A moment



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

after the official with whom I was speaking—he of the chastened countenance—added:

“He will do to stop a bullet.”<sup>1</sup>

In the afternoon, about two o’clock, I gave the sentinel at the outer door another opportunity to salute me, but he did not; he let me pass, however, and that was the main point.

The anteroom was not so full of uniforms in the wear as in the morning, which I readily accounted for to myself: the patriots are at lunch, and, having nothing else to do, then philosophically tarry over the wine—or maybe they are discussing weighty military problems, for which, it must be admitted, the smoke of good cigars at table is more favorable than that other smoke out of the flaming mouths of battle. Happy fellows! I did not see the man in scarlet, though I looked for him; neither did I wait to see more of what I had already seen enough, but, going straight to the sentinel or orderly at the inner door, I asked him:

“Is the general in his office?”

“No, he is at lunch.”

I persisted, “Is it worth while for me to stay?”

“I can’t say,” was the answer.

I went on, “I can see the adjutant-general?”

And the man replied: “Not now. He’s at lunch.”

Then I produced the morning report of my regiment, saying: “Sorry I can’t see him. Here is a report. Please deliver it.”

I turned away, and presently took to my saddle re-

<sup>1</sup> My sympathy for the Bulgarian, Charles Zagonyi, was so strong that I kept him in inquiry. At last accounts he was dead. In one of General Frémont’s battles with Stonewall Jackson, in Virginia, he was sent on some business to a distant part of the field, and somehow got between the engaged lines. His scarlet suit made him a conspicuous target, and a sharp-shooter of one side or the other brought him down. I give the story as it came to me.

## LEW WALLACE

flecting. Well, Ben McCulloch, with his red men and white savages, can't be coming here in haste. This is a headquarters for politicians, not soldiers. And their chief—ah, once a candidate, always a candidate! It don't suit me. I will try and get away. Riding to the nearest telegraph station, I begged Governor Morton to have me, if possible, ordered to Cairo or Paducah. I think the next day was July 9th, and it was red-lettered by the receipt of an order directing me to put my regiment on a steamboat then at the wharf, and report to General Charles F. Smith, at Paducah, Kentucky. I stayed in St. Louis long enough then to ration my men for three days and hurried to boat.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XXXIX

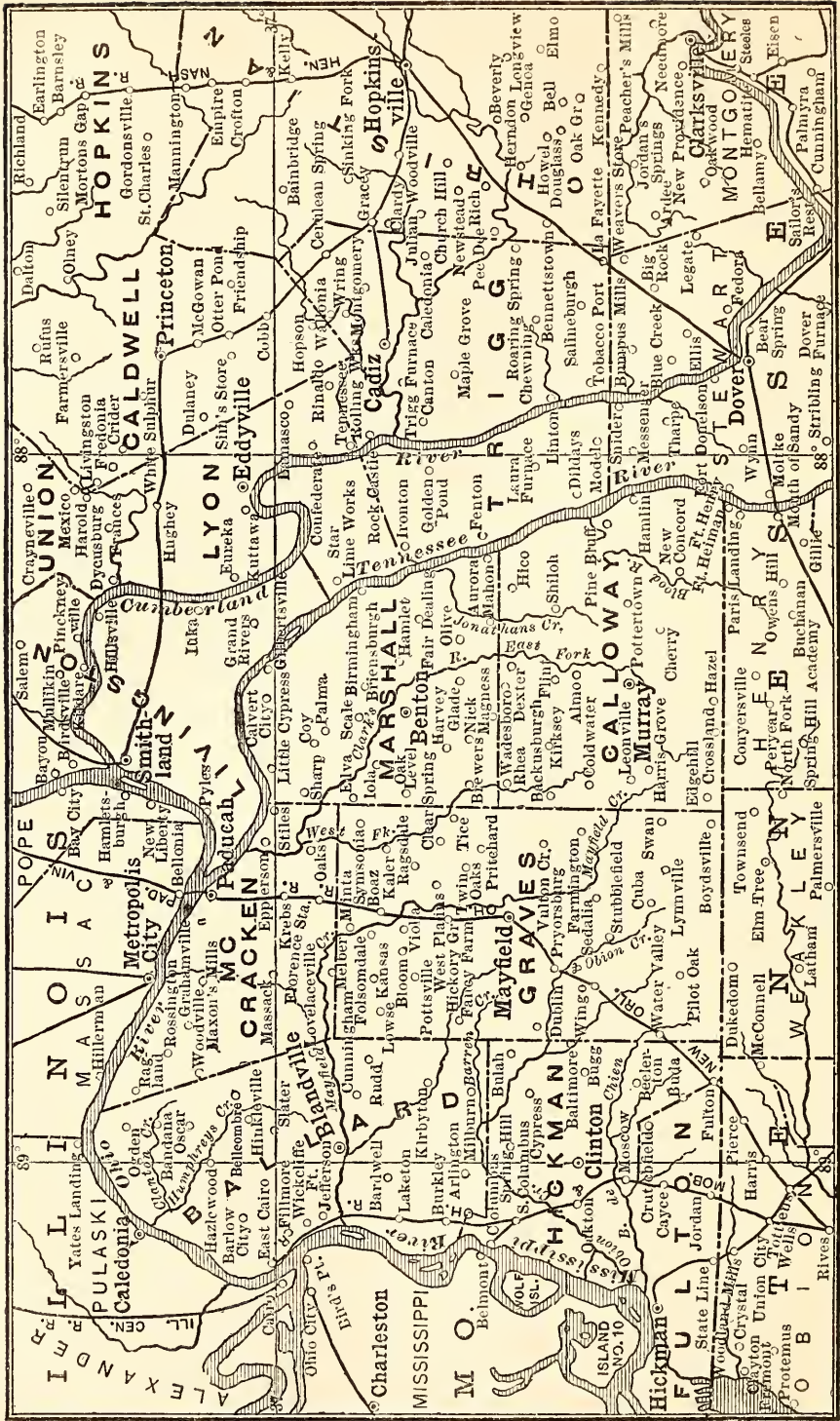
Removal of regiment to Paducah—Map—Plans for opening the Mississippi River — Operations in central Tennessee — Note: Grant and the Philadelphians at City Point—Forts Henry and Donelson.

ON the following page there is a map which I commend to the reader's attention. He will find it helpful, I think, to an understanding of the pages immediately following; aside from which, moreover, it includes a part of the country that must always have peculiar interest, if only because the grand operations which finished the Confederacy by cutting it in two had their commencement there.

I shall also presume to add to the map a legend or two explanatory of the positions occupied by the belligerents at the time of my arrival at Paducah, and how, in response to the exigencies of strategy, the positions came to be chosen.

The very first understanding between the North and South in connection with the war—tacit, of course—was that the South would content itself with holding its own, if it could; and therefore the defensive policy which marked its course from the beginning. Then the North, driven to act offensively, fixed its eyes upon two objectives: Richmond in the East, and in the West the opening of the Mississippi River to its mouth.

Now, the moral effect of the capture of the Confederate capital might have been greater upon the world outside than that which would follow the opening of the river;



SCENE OF OPERATIONS IN WESTERN KENTUCKY AND ADJACENT TERRITORY



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

yet the latter was strategically the more important, and for two reasons: first, if the river were opened and patrolled by the Federals the Confederacy would be divided, and communication between the parcels made physically impossible; in the next place, the Confederacy would be at our mercy on account of the many lines of invasion offered by the river, leaving the Federals free to conquer in detail. So true was this that General Grant, at City Point, put pressure upon General Lee, in Richmond, barely enough to hold him and his army there until the river was reduced to possession, and Sherman, by marching to the sea, had demonstrated the emptiness and utter exhaustion of the South. Then Grant moved, crushing as he went.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At City Point, in 1864, I was General Grant's guest, by special invitation, and witnessed a scene of rare interest.

It was announced at supper that the general would receive a delegation of citizens from Philadelphia, coming with an unknown purpose.

"We must be there," said Bowers, the assistant adjutant-general; "and you must watch Grant when it comes time for him to reply. You see, if he's a little stumped, and wants a moment to think, he always gets it by striking matches, pretending he can't get one to burn. Sometimes he'll spoil a bowlful; but when he has his idea clear, the trouble is over. The match goes off all right, and, his cigar lit, he turns and speaks."

The meeting took place in the little box the general called his office. We were all there; so was the delegation. The spokesman took the floor and delivered a speech the substance of which may be given.

"General Grant, we represent the business men of Philadelphia, and have been charged to tell you frankly that the country is suffering, and that you must do something decisive immediately. In the South, and along the Mississippi, operations are going on by land and water, and everybody is active. Sherman is absorbing all the attention. He is thundering away in the heart of the rebellion. You alone are doing nothing. We have come to implore you to wake up."

Grant, at the end, turned to the mantel above the fireplace, on which there was a bowlful of matches and a box of cigars. Taking a fresh cigar, he struck match after match without avail; it looked

So it came about that, at the prompting of General Scott, President Lincoln requested Governor Yates, of Illinois, to occupy Cairo, at the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers; and the governor made haste—in the latter part of April, if I remember rightly—to send two of his newly mustered regiments there under General Prentiss, thus forestalling the Confederates, and closing the Ohio River and also the Mississippi north of Cairo against them.

Then the Confederate authorities, alive to the importance of blockading the Mississippi south against the Federals, at length summarily brushed the film of Kentucky neutrality aside, and permitted General Polk to seize Columbus, next city below Cairo, fortify the bluff there, and assemble an army put variously at thirty or forty thousand in emphasis of menace. Hickman and Island No. 10, yet farther south were also fortified.

as if the supply would all go. Minutes passed; at last he struck fire. Then Bowers nudged me, and whispered:

“Listen—he’s ready.”

I give the reply substantially.

“Gentlemen,” the general said, “I am glad to hear from you that the country has not lost its interest in the war. You urge me to move, and have been at pains to come and tell me that Sherman will shortly shut me out of public attention if I don’t hurry and head him off. Well”—he stopped and whiffed a moment—“I will take you into my confidence, provided you do not take the newspapers into your confidence. Sherman is acting by order, and I am waiting on him. Just as soon as I hear that he is at some of the points designated on the sea-coast, then, the Mississippi River being secured for our boats, I will take Richmond. Were I to move now without advices from Sherman, Lee would evacuate Richmond, taking his army somewhere South, and I would have to follow him to keep him from jumping on Sherman. That would be very inconvenient to me, as it would compel me to haul supplies in wagons over unknown dirt roads to an unknown distance. I hope, gentlemen, you will report to your constituents how much obliged I am to General Lee for staying where he is; and be careful, please, to tell them that jealousy between General Sherman and me is impossible. Please smoke with me.”

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In May the gathering of Confederates at Columbus assumed such proportions that General Frémont increased the force at Cairo to five thousand men.

The Confederates then saw the possibility of invasion by way of the Tennessee River, and of turning their position at Columbus, and thought of occupying Paducah; but they were slow about it, and the Federals erected the military district of Cairo, and General Ulysses S. Grant, commanding, by a fortunate *coup* possessed himself of both Paducah and Smithland, and by doing so saved both the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers for future operations. This was in September; and without resting he strengthened his hold on Paducah, and placed Brigadier-General Charles F. Smith in charge.

In these latter moves there was much more than a hint of aggression, and to close the rivers against the Federals the Confederates again took thought, and built and armed Fort Henry, on the right bank of the Tennessee River, and Fort Donelson, on the left bank of the Cumberland. Opposite Fort Henry, on the Tennessee, they also threw up works, giving them the name Fort Heiman, which, being on a height, commanded the first-named fortification.

Such was the military situation when, on September 10th, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, the steamer drew up at the wharf boat at Paducah and disembarked the Eleventh Indiana.

## XL

Arrival in Paducah—General Charles F. Smith—His headquarters—  
Conversations—Promotion to rank of brigadier-general September 3, 1861.

IT is wonderful what trifles serve to prepossess us favorably or unfavorably. At Paducah, for instance—a crowd of soldiers on the landing—a quartermaster with a wagon-train to haul our goods to camp—cheering in reply to cheering, and thunderous applause in recognition of the “Star-spangled Banner” by my band on the hurricane-deck as the boat touched the wharf—small tokens, yet they signified welcome, and appreciation, and comradeship, and a real soldier somewhere about in command of the place, all in such delightful contrast with that sodden reception at St. Louis.

Leaving the regiment to Colonel McGinnis, I rode to report to General Charles F. Smith, whom I was anxious to see. By reputation he was the best all-around officer in the regular army—a disciplinarian, stern, unsympathetic, an ogre to volunteers, but withal a magnificent soldier of the old school of Winfield Scott.

The house in which he quartered, at once his residence and office, stood in a spacious lot in style a Southern mansion centred in fruit trees and flowering shrubs. An orderly paced leisurely to and fro in front of the door, a sabre rattling after him over the gravelled walk. Seeing me dismount at the gate, he hastened out and took the reins—so unlike the one of his class doing duty in front of the great man’s door in St. Louis.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"You want to see the general?"

"Yes—to report."

He hitched my horse and went before me.

"A moment," he said, at the door; and I waited while he went in.

"The general will see you," he said, coming back.

He led me through a hall, and into a room well furnished and warm, a fire burning cheerily in a grate. A broad table stood in the middle littered somewhat with books, writing material, a sword, sash, and gauntlet gloves—things noticed presently, for just then I had eyes for nothing but the man before me. He was very tall, erect, broad-shouldered, a symmetrical figure in a well-fitting uniform. He held his head high; long, white mustaches trailed below his chin shading his lower face; perfect health left its morning colors on his cheeks, and his blue eyes, bright with invitation, negatived the reputation he bore for sternness.

This description is elaborate, I know; and if one asks wherefore, the answer is ready—the man before me was by odds the handsomest, stateliest, most commanding I had ever seen, the one who has since remained in memory my ideal of a general officer. Probably better cannot be done than to add that his appearance has always helped me to a perfect understanding of the impression Washington is said to have left upon all who came near him.

"Colonel Wallace," said the orderly, going out therewith and closing the door.

The general did not move from his place before the fire, or even bend his head; much less did he come forward and shake hands; whereat I respected him the more, seeing then that he was a soldier without a tincture of the politician. To me, standing by the table uncapped, he said, simply, "You have just arrived?"

I answered respectfully.

"You found a quartermaster at the landing with wagons?"

"Yes—and I am obliged to you."

"Well, come round this evening."

The interview was closed, and I retired. After supper I waited upon him, and, the visit being purely social, he put his stateliness aside, and amused himself—and me as well, for I could see his object—with questions aimed at what I knew of soldiering and the service I had seen. When I arose to leave, he went with me to the door, and said: "Our situation here is somewhat precarious, and will be until the fort I have in process of construction is finished. Come again, to-morrow afternoon, and we will go over the map together."

I went away pleased, thinking he would not have asked me to return so soon, and for such an object, had he not seen in me wherewith to be pleased on his part.

Next afternoon the general spread a large map over the table, and pointed out how easily General Polk could make a dash from Columbus, and harry us at Paducah, and why he should do it. I asked if he knew General Polk's strength. "Yes," he said; "report gives him about ten thousand men, with additions coming in rapidly."

"Well," I asked, "say he takes Paducah, what can he do with it?"

Then, with his finger, he pointed out the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, saying, "These are lines leading into the heart of the seceding states, and, with Paducah fortified, you see how tight he locks them against us."

"Yes," I said, "but what is to prevent Grant from crossing the river from Cairo and cutting him off?"

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Smith laughed, and replied: "To attempt that Grant must have a force sufficient to give Polk battle, and"—he grew serious—"Frémont is too intent upon schemes of his own to think of strengthening us. I wonder he let your regiment come here."

Then for a time he smoked silently, half bent over the map, and I, impressed by his remark about the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers, followed them in their tortuous courses, vaguely suspecting the use to which they would be put.

The evening passed pleasantly. He led the conversation throughout, speaking of the war, and so constantly that it became apparent he thought of nothing else. I knew he must be rich in reminiscences, that he must know the old officers, Scott, Harney, Twiggs, and tried to divert him to them, but without success. He alluded several times mystically to some grand operation then in the forward perspective, and which, when undertaken, would be worth a long, ordinary life to every one engaged in it. What it was he did not then disclose, but I could see how the very thought of it stirred him to enthusiasm. "Opportunities — opportunities — opportunities," he kept repeating, with the eagerness of a young man.

My return to camp was with a feeling of content founded upon the flattering notice taken of me by my new chief, at which, it is true, I wondered. Then the great something ahead—though dealt to me in allusion, it warmed my fancy as it had his blood. What was it? What could it be? Anyhow, I was warned to get ready.

The day following, leaving the regiment to settle itself in camp, I rode to see what the army of which I had become a part was like. It was of all arms, about five thousand strong, mostly Illinoisans, new, of course, but of excellent material. One regiment in particular at-

tracted me — the Eighth Missouri, Morgan L. Smith, colonel; and of him and his more anon.

Then again drilling, drilling. The days were filled with it. Meantime, the fort grew and put on an air of strength, and in further defence we constructed a long stretch of palisading. Occasionally, too, as if to keep us reminded of what time was bringing, our vedettes were driven in, and the pickets put to trial by the enemy, and to every alarm we turned out, not being able to distinguish the true from the false. In it all there was an excitement which I confess I enjoyed.

One day an official communication astonished me. It was from the adjutant-general at Washington. I tore the envelope open, wondering why he addressed me directly. Now, I had not thought of being brigadier-general; neither had any one notified me of an effort to that end in my behalf; yet here was formal notice of a commission carrying that grade on the road for me. I put the paper in my pocket, and poked about all day, saying nothing about it to anybody.

To accept the appointment was to leave the regiment, now an object of immense pride. In the next place, I knew nothing of the duties of a brigadier, my brigade association having been too limited to help me pick up information about them from observation; and, being caught unawares, it made me shiver to think of the responsibilities of the place, especially of its responsibilities in battle, that supreme trial in the preparation for which I was at that period all engrossed. What should I do? I felt the urgencies of ambition; but love of the regiment pulled against them, while my ignorance sapped my confidence. At length I concluded to consult General Smith; what he said, that I would do.

In the evening I found him sitting before the fire a picture of comfort. There was no litter on the table



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

this time—only a decanter, with glasses, all on a silver platter, and a pitcher of water. Without rising, he said: “Bring up a chair. It’s chilly outside.” And then, when I was seated: “What is it? Anything I can do for you?”

I gave him the communication from the adjutant-general, and he read it gravely, and, rising, said, “Well, sir, what of it?”

Then I, too, stood up, and answered with his directness, “Will you tell me if I ought to accept that appointment?”

“Why not?”

“Because I don’t know anything about the duties of a brigadier-general.

He was surprised, and after regarding me sharply for a moment, as if to settle a doubt, he said: “This is extraordinary. Here have I been spending a long life to get an appointment like this one about which you are hesitating; and yet that isn’t it—that you should confess your ignorance—good God! Who ever heard of the like?”

He went to the table, filled two glasses from the decanter, and offered me one of them.

“Had you come here not doubting your sufficiency,” he said, “I should have decided you meant a parade of your good-fortune; as it is, I say accept—accept by all means—and I will give you the benefit of what I know about the duties of the place, be it much or little. We can always make something of a man who is willing to admit that he don’t know it all.”

Then from the mantel he brought a book which I recognized as the *United States Army Regulations*, and when we were seated he gave me a free-and-easy lecture of which I still remember some of the points.

“I divide the duties of a brigadier-general into two

classes," he began—"those owing to his immediate superiors, and those owing to his command; and of the first, first . . . Obedience being the soul of military organization, I hold it the beginning and end of duty. It is the rein in hand by which the superior does his driving. . . . The difference between a captain and a general with respect to duties is that the general is a captain with multiplied and extended relations. . . . The chief duties of a general to his command may be classified—the enforcement of discipline—tactical instruction—care of the health of his men—and they are all important because tending to efficiency, the measure of which is the exact measure of his own efficiency. . . . Government furnishes everything actually needful to the good condition of the army; and of us—you and me, for instance—it merely asks in return that we know how to get those things, and to help us to the knowledge it has furnished a system of formal requisitions which fools call 'red tape.' But I"—he stopped and held up the well-known volume in blue—"I pronounce it the perfection of wisdom, since by it alone the government is enabled to keep accounts, prevent waste, and assert the principle of personal responsibility. Here is that system—in this book, more indispensable to every officer than his sword, for even in battle he can make out with a riding-whip. As the preacher knows his Bible, as the lawyer knows his statutes, every general should know the regulations and articles of war. Here they are within these lids"—and I noticed he fondled them caressingly—"here he will find every duty relative to the care of his command defined and prescribed. . . . It is not possible for a general always to see with his own eyes, or be in two places at the same time; hence the device of a staff—that is, an *alter ego* for every duty. . . . Staff-officers should be men of aptitude and

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

experience, not figure-heads or mere pretty men. . . . In battle a general's duties, in so far as they are reducible to rule, are—first, to fight; second, to fight to the best advantage. . . . Genius is determinable by the manner of obedience. A fort is to be taken; genius consists in finding a way to take it with the least appreciable loss. A campaign is to be planned; genius proves itself by devising the best plan; at the same time, strange as it seems, he the most capable in planning may be the most incapable in execution, making two different qualities. The great genius is he who possesses both the qualities. . . . Battle is the ultimate to which the whole life's labor of an officer should be directed. He may live to the age of retirement without seeing a battle; still he must always be getting ready for it exactly as if he knew the hour of the day it is to break upon him. And then, whether it come late or early, he must be willing to fight—he *must* fight."

I went back to camp from the lecture a much wiser man, and a very grateful one; and when the commission came it was accepted. Its date is September 3, 1861.

## XLI

Taking leave of the regiment—The staff—Tearing down the rebel flag—General Smith's attitude—Grant's visit at Paducah—Damaging newspaper stories.

UPON qualifying under my new commission, life seemed to deepen in tone—that is, it seemed to take on a seriousness theretofore unknown to me, due probably to a consciousness of introduction to a field of action higher and broader than any I had been used to thinking about. Not that I was elated or that my vanity underwent any increase having a richer morsel to feed upon; it is the truth, honestly confessed, I was too anxious for either of those effects—anxious lest I should fail the honor to which I had so unexpectedly risen. Yet I sent to Chicago for shoulder-straps and new saddle-housings; and when they came, and the eagle of the colonel gave place on my shoulder to the star of a brigadier, I mounted them with what doubtless appeared to others the most unaffected cheerfulness.

In looking back now I find a peculiar pleasure in recalling that in the midst of my own good-fortune, calling it such, I did not forget to exert myself in securing the appointment of Lieutenant-Colonel McGinnis to the vacant coloneley; and when he was commissioned—thanks to Governor Morton's appreciation of the soldierly qualities of the man—I had a comfortable feeling that the regiment was in hands as safe as my own, if not safer.

The parting with the regiment took place at a dress-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

parade and without ceremony. Calling Colonel McGinnis to my right, I presented him as my successor so well known that eulogy was unnecessary. With good wishes for every one standing under the colors, the sincerity of which might not be doubted, for it was with the utmost difficulty I kept in voice, I rode away amid cheering, and established headquarters in a house near by secured for me by my quartermaster.

General Smith assigned me a brigade composed of the Eleventh Indiana, Colonel George F. McGinnis; the Eighth Missouri, Colonel Morgan L. Smith; the Twenty-third Indiana, Colonel W. C. Sanderson; Battery A, of Chicago, Captain James Smith, and Company I, Fourth United States Dragoons, Lieutenant Powell.

The possession of a command required me to select a staff, and in doing this I was regardful of the sage advice of General Smith already given. Captain Fred Kneffler became my assistant adjutant-general; Captain Joseph P. Pope, commissary; Captain Charles W. Lyman, quartermaster; Thomas W. Fry, surgeon; Lieutenants James R. Ross and Addison Ware, aides-de-camp, and the Rev. John D. Rogers, chaplain. My obligations to these officers, I pause to say, continue with all their original force notwithstanding most of them are asleep in their long homes. Association with them taught me the exquisite propriety of the use of the term *family* in definition of the relation between the chief and members of his staff—a relation of which confidence is the primary element.

General Smith, to whom I carried the staff-list, notified me, confidentially, that important movements involving his whole division would be shortly set afoot, notwithstanding the approach of winter. "You know the initiative is on us," he said, cheerfully, adding, "and every moment of time should be put to good use."

Accepting the hint, I bent all my energies to making ready.

That men before whom such action was in near prospect should know one another smacked, I thought, of sound philosophy, and with that in view I brought the several camps into a more neighborly group. Then I inspected every command, trying it at drill, the infantry in especial.

Sanderson, of the Twenty-third Indiana, had some obsolete ideas acquired by him in the war with Mexico, of which he had been a reputable officer. To shake him free of them, I opened a school of instruction for him and his subordinates. The results were quick and gratifying.

Smith, of the Eighth Missouri, proved himself really uncommon. The faculty of disciplining raw soldiers had been in him at birth. A deficiency in college and drawing-room graces in no wise detracted from his efficiency as a soldier.<sup>1</sup> To my surprise, not knowing him, I found his regiment wonderfully up in the tactics, Zouave and ordinary.<sup>2</sup> The confidence that existed between him

<sup>1</sup> After the battle of Shiloh, Morgan L. Smith, upon my recommendation, was made brigadier-general. Subsequently he arose to a full major-generalship, the promotions being in each instance for good conduct in action.

<sup>2</sup> It became the rule with me to omit nothing in my power likely to beget, with officers and men over whom I reached control, that certain feeling impossible of definition except by the French *camaraderie*, which, to my understanding, means something akin to brotherhood more than mere companionship. At all events, the word had never a better illustration than by the relation that sprang up between the Eighth Missouri and the Eleventh Indiana, a fiery actuation of youth which age has not been able entirely to cool. As a consequence, a singular confusion of lines, to speak after the manner of soldiers, marked their intercourse, not alone while they were of the same brigade and division, but afterwards as well. In 1864 the Eleventh Indiana was holding Helena, Arkansas. A transport, carrying the Eighth Missouri en route to New Orleans, stopped there

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and his men could not be credited to any persuasive arts on his part; he was in speech the roughest commander I ever met. His officers were able, and they rendered him united support.

As for Company A, Chicago Light Artillery, I doubt if another aggregation like it ever answered at reveille in any army. The reference is not merely to courage and general proficiency, though in those respects the company equalled the best, but to accomplishments picked up in course of city life and peculiarly theirs; insomuch that it had been possible for them to have responded with *éclat* to almost any social demand, for on their roster there were musicians, singers, *raconteurs*, comedians, journalists, and artists of every kind. The night after publication of their assignment to my brigade, they sent me an invitation to come and see them in camp, itself an elaborate wonder. At the gate they received me with a function which was such a medley of fun and frolic that my dignity came to grief at once. That they followed with minstrelsy and a collation. Of their fighting I will speak hereafter. The world does not know how heroically they behaved at Donelson. After this I fell to thinking of the hundred and more royal good-fellows as one man, and that the spirit of Taillefer, the last of the Minnesingers, had taken possession of him.

The work that fell to me was hard and monotonous, to deliver government stores. To keep the Eighth on board, the steamer was anchored several hundred feet out in the boiling current. No sooner did she begin swinging to her cable than every man of the regiment who could swim, fully a third of the whole number, plunged into the water, without undressing, and swam ashore. The captain, in great distress, went to the colonel; he could not wait an hour. "Never mind," said the colonel, laughing. "The boys have gone to see the old folks. They'll be down when their visit is out. Go on." It was a month before the Eleventh, into whose arms they landed, would let them all go.



relieved, however, by the very perceptible progress of my brigade. Indeed, affairs were going well with me when an accident occurred that upset my little cup of content—an incident of dismal future consequence.

I happened one day to be with General Smith at his house. Captain Newsham, his assistant adjutant-general, came into the room and reported a mob at Mr. W——k's across the street. The general told him to go and disperse it. Presently an orderly appeared, and said it was the Eleventh Indiana, with others of the Second Brigade, taking a secession flag from W——k's house. General Smith grew excited.

"How's this?" he asked, sharply.

I assured him I knew nothing about the affair, but would see about it and report.

I reached the scene in time to find Captain Kneffler, my adjutant-general, at fisticuffs with Newsham. With some trouble I separated them. Newsham was pursued with clubs and stones. After rescuing him again, I returned to W——k's just as the stars and stripes supplanted the stars and bars on his house. From a post of the front gate, I ordered everybody off to his quarters. They went cheering; whereupon I returned to General Smith and reported. His excitement had increased in the mean time. In all his years of service such a thing, he said, had not happened to him. He would make an example of the officers engaged in it. I ventured to suggest the number whom he would have to arrest—nearly the whole brigade—and, dwelling upon W——k's imprudence, and the natural indignation of the men, I finally got the old soldier calmed down.

"Here—sit down here, and write a general order to be read to the division. They are not soldiers yet—only politicians. You know them better than I do. Write."



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

And I wrote.

Next afternoon the general order was published to the division over the general's name. The order is still extant. No one has ever suspected the authorship.

This affair, apparently so trifling, worked me an injury of long standing. Unfortunately, it furnished the newspapers a welcome theme. Accrediting me with the outbreak, they complimented my patriotism, and denounced General Smith. Nobody but a traitor, they proclaimed, would have found fault with the substitution of the flags. From Paducah the story passed to headquarters at Cairo, thence to headquarters at St. Louis, in both of which the military offence was seen and discussed as of my incitement and I incontinently set down for a political demagogue.

Seeing the trend of the affair, I carried it to General Smith. He laughed at me.

"Why," he said, "don't you see? If I can stand to be accused of disloyalty, what have you to grumble at?" In another interview he grew angry.

"Disloyal—I? The —— scoundrels!"

Suddenly he stopped.

"What an ass I am making of myself! A few days more, and I'll have a chance to show if I am a traitor. It's their day now; it will be mine then."

He stubbornly refused to allow me to card the papers in his behalf or my own.

Another circumstance of bad result to me is to be mentioned.

In the latter part of October, 1861, General Ulysses S. Grant visited Paducah accompanied by his staff. Not having rooms in his house for the entertainment of the entire party, General Smith requested me to take some of them; and, with his usual courtesy, he allowed me to choose whom I preferred. General Grant and

Major John A. Rawlins, his adjutant-general, were assigned to me.

It is to be remembered now that in October, 1861, General Grant was comparatively unknown. He had already rendered valuable service to the Cause in the seizure of Paducah and Smithland, but the time had not yet arrived when the prescience and promptitude shown therein admitted estimation. He had not even fought the battle of Belmont. So when, with General Smith and Major Rawlins, he alighted from a hack in front of my house, I received him as I would any other undistinguished officer of his rank.

The afternoon was dark and chilly. A good fire burned in the parlor. My servant took the belongings of the strangers, hats and overcoats; after which General Grant drew his chair towards the grate, and said, spreading his hands before the blaze and looking around:

"Well, this is cheerful!"

I recollect, also, the firelight illuminating his face and shining through his beard cut short, deepening its natural reddish tinge. Two other things *apropos* his appearance, and distinctly recalled: one, a uniform coat off-color and the worse for tarnished brass buttons; another, that there was nothing about him suggestive of greatness, nothing heroic.

I opened a box of cigars, and he smoked incessantly and talked freely, but without an allusion to the war, much less the military situation.

After dinner, which was chiefly of commissary stores, General Smith called and took my guest walking. In the two hours they were gone, I suppose they discussed the business to which the honor of the visit was due.

The evening passed delightfully. That the audience became interested may be imagined from the fact that

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Grant and Smith did the talking, in course of which they plied each other and us with reminiscences of Mexico and the war of 1846. As a narrator Grant was the better of the two.<sup>1</sup> Not until near morning did the session adjourn.

Next day General Grant inspected the camps and returned to Cairo.

The week was hardly out before newspapers began reaching Paducah laden with lurid accounts of the meeting at my house. It was an orgie, a beastly drunken revel led by both Grant and Smith—so the story ran. There were liquors and cigars on the night in question, and some singing, but no intoxication or anything like a revel. Nevertheless, a charge against General Grant of habitual drunkenness arose about that time, and spread through the country, greatly to his mortification and detriment, and some of his friends, thinking the slander had its origin the night he was my guest in Paducah, were disposed to hold me responsible for the publicity of the affair. In self-defence, I finally traced the offensive articles to a regimental chaplain, and induced him to resign. The general himself, I think, acquitted me of blame, but certain members of his staff, subsequently my enemies, were not so generous.

The matter of the flag was not so easily settled, except with General Smith, and will have another appearance later on.

<sup>1</sup> General Grant could not make a speech; in amends for that, however, he was really a fine talker, and particularly excellent in description.

## XLII

The advance to Viola—Burning of the town—*Conestoga* and Lieutenant-Commander Phelps—The fugitive slave—The reconnoissance at Panther Island—Fort Henry—Colonel Lloyd Tilghman.

THE railroad from Paducah to Union City, with a branch thence to Columbus, was in fair condition, and, if it did not make General Smith nervous, put him at least upon guard. I think he had a feeling that if he were Bishop Polk, and master of an advantage like that road, with rolling stock—the Confederates had been careful to secure every locomotive and car—he would not sleep until Paducah was repossessed. He had only to imitate Joe Johnston's march from Winchester to Manassas—that is, despatch his artillery and supplies by rail, and the infantry and cavalry "overland." Grant at Cairo, having to mobilize and cross the Mississippi, was not nearly so deterrent as Patterson at Bunker Hill.

The surprise of a chief of General Smith's experience was difficult, if not impossible. The ordinary resorts of picket and vedettes were not enough for him. He kept a correspondent in Columbus, and in the country between Paducah and Mayfield maintained an outlying detachment of mixed arms varying in strength from one to two thousand men.

This duty was an experience in partisan warfare not without value. When it was intrusted to me I was flattered. The work was hard. Mud, rain, frost, occasional snow, swamps, bad roads, tangled woods, and sunken creeks unbridged were the concomitants, and



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

my orders were not to allow myself to be drawn into a serious engagement. A town of four or five houses and a saw-mill, called Viola, I converted into a centre of operation. Once the enemy marched into Mayfield four or five times my force. By a passing countryman I sent the officer a challenge to come out and try conclusions. Instead of accepting the bluff, he took the road to Columbus. Perhaps he, too, was under orders not to fight. Once he beat up my pickets. Forming behind Mayfield Creek, I offered him battle, but he again declined. The courier with my report to General Smith gave out fighting in progress. In a time incredibly short I was reinforced by hundreds of stragglers who had somehow smuggled themselves out of the camp at Paducah. I went to sleep one night in Viola. Upon rising in the morning mine was the only house standing. The others, saw-mill and all, were ashes. I tried earnestly to discover the perpetrators. In expeditions like the one in which I was engaged, the commanding officer is all-powerful. The near completion of our forts brought the duty to an end, and I received the thanks of my superior and was immensely pleased.

A few days after General Grant's visit to Paducah, I was sent with a flying column down through the same debatable region to reconnoitre and break up a Confederate camp located, as General Smith had heard, a few miles out of Columbus. The camp was found and burned. Afterwards, to my astonishment, I heard that my movement, in combination with another crossed to the left bank of the river from Cairo, had been a feint to occupy General Polk's attention while General Grant fought the battle of Belmont.<sup>1</sup> That, it turned out, was the business which had brought the district com-

<sup>1</sup> The battle of Belmont took place October 6th.

mander to Paducah. As a secret it had been well kept.

In January—the 10th, I think—General Smith conducted his whole command on a march memorable to every man who participated in it.<sup>1</sup> Through Graves County into Calloway County far down towards Fort Henry he led us. The country had become an ocean of mud, and there was rain and melting snow, and from the beginning to end no dry place to set a foot could be discovered. Hard—very hard—a genuine foretaster. General Smith could have had comfortable houses often as night overtook us; but such was not his habit when on the road. I remember finding him one fluvial midnight in a dog-tent half filled with straw. In such manner he silenced the croakers.

After that Calloway *voyage*—the term is not unreasonable—I took to drilling my brigade in marching, and with the best results; in view of which it has been ever since a wonder to me that a practice of such importance is so persistently neglected, specially where the commands are large and mixed. To “get there” is one thing; to “get there” to the best advantage is another.

There came to me then—it was in the latter part of January—an experience so altogether novel and full of excitement that in my best thought I class it as of

<sup>4</sup> By the unknowing this movement has been criticised. It looked like a purposeless feint against Fort Henry. It was really a movement in combination. While General McClernand, with a column on transports, descended the Mississippi and, landing on the Kentucky shore, threatened Columbus from the rear, two other columns were marching as if to support him—Paine’s from Bird’s Point, in Missouri, Smith’s from Paducah; at the same time a third pushed up to Smithland. This stir, deepened by the simultaneous apparition of gun-boats on the waters in unexpected places, must have been confusing to the enemy. It was the promised grand campaign in preliminaries.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

my choicest memories. Lieutenant-Commander Phelps, of the navy, called at my house one day and said that with his boat, the *Conestoga*, he was going up the Tennessee River to take a look at Fort Henry. The authorities, military and naval, meaning Halleck, Grant, and Flag-Officer Foote, were desirous of all the information obtainable about that stronghold; though the particulars wanted were—had new works been added to the old, and had the armament been strengthened? Satisfaction on these points would call for a close inspection. The lieutenant-commander closed his explanation by inviting me to go with him. He would be glad to show me what a willing host can do on ship-board.

The courtesy was one to be instantly accepted. The experience would be novel. I could see somewhat of sailor life under unusual conditions. Besides being an officer of ability and dash, Phelps was a gentlemen refined, well-read, and a delightful companion. I hurried an orderly to General Smith with an explanatory note, and, receiving the permission I sought, gladly accepted the invitation.<sup>1</sup>

Being a landsman of the ultra-lubber variety, I shall not try to describe the *Conestoga*. Indeed, I remember not more of her than that she was flat-bottomed, very broad, and black all over; that her upper deck was in the style of a sea-goer, with bulwarks up to my shoulder; that there was a great gun at her bow, and that the pilot-house and commander's quarters were on the upper deck. I remember, also, the exceeding whiteness of the planking of that deck, the stealthy silence of the

<sup>1</sup> There were twelve gun-boats constructed for river service. Of these, seven were protected with plates two and a half inches thick; the rest were tin-clads—that is, sheathed in armor merely bullet-proof. Andrew H. Foote, the flag-officer, commanded the flotilla.

ship's going, and the cheerfulness with which everybody on board went about his duty.

So, too, at meal-times, the table-cloths and napkins did such honor to the laundry, and the table-ware was so above suspicion, and the courses brought on were of such wholesome variety and masterly preparation that I could not help rating my host for the advantages of his service compared with ours of the land.

The river was in good boating condition, and very beautiful despite the touches of winter apparent in the trees.

At the coming of night we invariably dropped anchor in the middle of the stream. We held no communication with the shore. Hamlets and farm-houses were frequent; but the people seemed to keep watch against us, and at sight of our smoke in the distance vanished, how and where Heaven knew. The gun-boatmen enjoyed the terror they inspired.

At length we reached a stretch of water long extended, and as the anchor went down, Phelps said: "Here we stop for the night. To-morrow about nine o'clock I will give you a look at the fort." As he spoke, the boat, obedient to the current under her, dropped slowly back, and directly hung nose up-stream.

The sun had then an hour and a half in which to make its descent; and already evening, its silence more noticeable because of the cessation of the engines and the smothered cough of the escape-pipe, was settling over the land and river. Suddenly the baying of a hound was heard. It came from the left shore, and, startled, we looked that way; nor we alone. Every man on the deck stopped in his employment and looked.

At our left, beyond a margin of water seventy-five or eighty yards in width, and very still and smooth-flowing, the shore was thinly fringed with half-grown



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

willows, fast being denuded of leaves; beyond the willows stretched a cornfield bounded on its farther side by a fence and a woods. Every eye was fixed on the woods. Another deep-mouthed note of the hound—and another—and another—and then a chorus of yelps fast and furious.

“There’s a pack of them,” said Phelps; “and the fox is not far off.”

Then there arose a nearer burst in louder concert.

“A fox, did you say, sir? It’s a man, sir. Look—he’s jumping the fence.”

And following the sailor’s pointing, sure enough a negro ran out of the woods and fairly threw himself over the rails.

I had brought a field-glass with me, and, finding it helpful to my interest in the outing, was wearing it at the instant. To take it out and hand it to Phelps was instantaneous.

“There,” he said, quickly; “I see it now. They are hunting the man with blood-hounds. He sees the ship and is heading this way.”

He took the glass down and his face was flushed.

“The small boat! Out with it—quick!”

Men never sprang with more alacrity to obey an order.

Now I had heard of hunting slaves with blood-hounds, but never thought of actually seeing such a chase. Sympathy for the fugitive, quickened by impulsive, wrath against his pursuer, whoever he might be, shook me through; and when the dogs doing the baying burst out of the woods, half a dozen of them, and, taking the fence at a bound, came crashing through the frost-burned corn-stalks, I confess to being ready to kill. Then, a minute later, when three men on horseback rode out of the woods hallooing and flourishing whips, they,

not the dogs, drew the rush of my murderous feeling. Meantime, the negro appeared half across the field. He was hatless and coatless, and the tatters of his shirt fluttered like ribbons behind him, and in his awful terror he shrieked, "Help! help!" and now and then he stretched a hand towards the ship, possibly to the flag then in sight. Meantime, also, the small boat was down and flying to the rescue. I have seen many races in my life, but never one of such compounded interest as that one—never one that so sickened me.

Phelps, watching as well as he could through the glass, unsteady on account of his excitement, dropped it presently, and ordered a rifle brought him, adding to me, "He'll not make it." And across the water he sent an order to his boatmen: "Faster—faster, lads"—this though he knew they were rowing for dear life.

Three rifles were brought loaded. Phelps took one and I one.

"Shoot at the pack," he said.

"Never while those devils on horseback are courting a shot."

They were then halted at the fence. He fired, and missed; so did I. The dogs gave him no heed; the men scurried back into the woods. I shoot well ordinarily; but in this instance the bearing hand was too shaky, and often as the affair has recurred to me I have been thankful for my failure.

The negro came on yelling "help" at every step; the dogs behind were gaining fast, and their baying had in it a triumphant strain. The boatmen, too, were making their oars bend like green withes. On the deck everybody was holding his breath. It was crisis time.

"Take to the willows," Phelps shouted. Like myself he had forgotten he had a gun. And whether he heard or not, the "man and brother" gained a tree,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and rose clinging to a branch just as the hounds snapped at his heels. A trifle later the boat ran in under him, and the sailors landed and drove the hounds off with their oars.

"Bring the man aboard," Phelps shouted, and turned away relieved.

"It was a close call," I said.

"Life is filled with close calls," he returned. "It may be our turn to-morrow."

I never saw a more piteous human being than the negro at last on deck, carried thither, and laid down helpless. His bare, black skin glistened through his torn clothes. His face looked as if some one had thrown handfuls of ashes in it, and he lay speechless, and gasping for breath.

"Take him to the doctor," said Phelps, adding: "The affair is over. To your quarters, men."

Presently silence reclaimed the ship.

When the fugitive came round, he told an old story of slavery. A longing for freedom—an attempt to escape—discovery and pursuit. He was not sent back—or rather nobody ever appeared to demand him.

Next morning the vessel was under way early. We breakfasted as usual, after which I accompanied Phelps in his rounds of the quarters. There was no excitement and but few words; yet even I could see the readiness for action. The inspection ended by our bringing up at the bow. The big gun there stood out uncovered, looking for all the world like a long, black, lathe-turned log. At hand lay a red flannel bag which I recognized at once as the regulation charge of powder, and by it a shell suggestive of a nail keg standing on end. The men serving the monster fell into position and saluted. Two sailors I observed leaning over the bulwark, one

on either side of the bow, gazing into the water. They did not look up.

"We are going slow," I said to my host.

"Yes," he replied, "we are in the torpedo zone as reported."

I looked at the two sailors at the bow, and understood why they were fishing with their eyes so intently in the water. I, also, mentally approved the going slow.

Afterwhile some one called out, "Yonder—who are they?"

"Where?"

"On the left bank, pretty well up."

Phelps whipped out a long binocular hanging strapped to his shoulder, and, making it ready, followed the shore slowly.

"Soldiers, mounted and going full speed," he said. "If the enemy is not already notified of our coming, he will be."

"Vedettes," I suggested.

"Very likely."

"What island is that ahead?"

"Panther Island."

He went to the man at the wheel, and presently we were entering the western channel of the island. I could not help admiring the good sense of the manœuvre. Upon rounding the insular obstruction, the *Conestoga* would be in sight and in easy range from the fort; instead, then, of offering the vessel broadside on to the multiplied chances of a hit, should fire be opened upon her, our bow, built strong for fighting, would be the target; at the same time we would be in position to reply immediately.

Phelps then rejoined me. The moment, I freely admit, was warm with interest.

"If they open on you," I asked, "will you fight?"



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"No, my business is to look, and if I should shroud the ship in smoke my occupation would be gone."

We cleared the channel and moved out boldly into the main stream. Nobody spoke; everybody strained his eyes seeing what he could of the stronghold at the end of at least two miles of unbroken waterway.

I saw, among the things now in memory, first a flag-staff; what the flag on the staff was could only be conjectured, there not being breeze enough to blow it out; then a fortification built squat on low ground. Three bastions offered fronts to us, and in embrasures I counted three heavy guns commanding all down the river. One bastion extended its outward angle into the river. I saw roofs of sheds, barracks for the garrison, and other guns defending on the land side where all was clearing. What interested me most, however, was the sight of the three great guns manned and trained on us. We had not surprised the enemy. Would he fire? The *Conestoga*, I have said, was a tin-clad. One shell exploded in her hulk might send us all to the bottom.

The boat slowed, then came to a stand-still. The view was fair. Heaven's best light was in our favor. While we were looking, a man, evidently an officer, stepped out on the parapet by the big gun of the lower bastion of the fort, and entertained himself returning our bravado like for like.<sup>1</sup>

"I am satisfied," Phelps at length said. "There is one large gun newly mounted—the third one from the water-battery."

Putting up his glass, he turned to the wheel-house

<sup>1</sup> I saw General Lloyd Tilghman after the surrender of the fort, and recognized him as the officer who came out on the parapet, glass in hand, to see the *Conestoga*. It was not a thought in my mind then that within a month I would be his successor in command.

## LEW WALLACE

and waved his hand, and the boat began dropping back—back—and almost before I knew it we were behind the screen of Panther Island. And so ended the last observation of Fort Henry before the grand expedition assembled and moved against it.

## XLIII

The brigade organized—The advance upon Fort Henry—Fort Heiman—The *Conestoga*—John, the horse—The Chicago Battery—Pete Wood's Minnesingers—The occupation of Fort Henry—The mail-bag.

ONE evening General Smith sent an orderly for me. It was in the last week of January, and cold. A fire burned in his grate. He spread a large map on the table and descanted on the grand movement he had been promising me. I remember his saying, his eyes glistening with pleasure, "It [the movement] will begin here"—he laid a finger on Fort Henry—"and end here"—in the same way designating Corinth. "At Corinth there may be a battle, though not necessarily; if we hurry, there will not. The transports are assembling at Cairo. Meantime, you are to go to Smithland and inspect the regiments there, and organize them into a brigade and make them ready to take the field at an hour's notice. A boat is now waiting for you. Here is the order."

During this speech he was the picture of cheerfulness. I fear I was not, for he asked, sharply, "What's the matter now?" And I answered, "I would prefer my old brigade to a new one."

He laughed at me. "Go 'long! You are not relieved. Only be back in time."

There were five or six regiments at Smithland, and a battery or two. To organize a brigade, find the

senior colonel, put him in command,<sup>1</sup> and do the inspection took me three days. On the fourth I was in Paducah again, report in hand.

Then General Smith took us; and the drilling was incessant, varied by reviews and inspections. In these latter he always appeared mounted, and in the full regalia of a brigadier-general.

On Sunday, February 1st, I think, a number of empty steamboats arrived and tied up at Paducah. Then, the same day, there was riding in hot haste from camp to camp; tents went down, and the streets filled with troops in orderly march to the river. The excitement was tremendous, for now no one was so dull as not to know the meaning of the sudden break-up. Before night the second division of the Army of the Tennessee was snugly afloat.

Next day seven gun-boats, four of them armored, black, creeping, menacing, ugly objects to look at, passed the city upward-bound. Among them I recognized the *Conestoga*. Behind followed a long line of transports in convoy, each loaded to the guards with the first division from Cairo, Brigadier-General John A. McClernand commanding. Then arose a hurricane of cheers long continued, and the rivalry of bands playing, flags streaming. Next, one by one our boats swung into the brave procession. We waved adieus to Paducah, and for the time forgot it in the new interest born of the mighty business on which we were embarked. The getting ready for this movement had been immensely laborious, including, as it did, the collection of supplies and ordnance stores, and their shipment, to say nothing of the ordering of the army, so nicely antici-

<sup>1</sup> It is my recollection now that Colonel Chetlain, of Illinois, held the oldest commission, and was placed in command. He was a very excellent officer and accomplished gentleman.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

pated that it stood in columns instantly upon landing—such were the elements of the first test of capacity imposed upon General Grant. There is no law more absolutely just than that by which in military operations the credit or discredit, according to results, is inseparable from the responsibility.

The going was mostly at night. Stopping in good time the day following, about five miles below Fort Henry, McClelland's division landed on the right bank; ours drew to the left bank; and, under cover of the gunboats, the debarking of both took place, after which they went into bivouac.

The details of the operation had not been confided to me. In some particulars, however, I was well informed. Thus, I had already viewed the fort from the *Conestoga*. It had been permitted me, also, to see on General Smith's table in Paducah a sketch of an unfinished fortification crowning a height on the western side of the river, Heiman by name, borrowed from its commander, a German colonel of a regiment of Irishmen in the Confederate service. Two hundred feet at least above the level of the Tennessee, it dominated the whole site of the main works, its *vis-à-vis*, Henry. So, when we landed I saw what was expected of General Smith, and from that hint worked out the general scheme to which we were now committed past withdrawal. Foote was to attempt reduction of Fort Henry; McClelland, moving upon the right bank, was to assist Foote, and catch the garrison did it try to escape by land; Smith's part of the programme was the capture of Fort Heiman. And what should these endeavors be but simultaneous? What a spectacle, could one see it!

The second night, while we lay in bivouac, there fell a rain, which, besides flooding us and the country roundabout, started the river, already high, to rising.

## LEW WALLACE

In the evening of the 5th an officer brought a note to General Smith, who told me when the man was gone, "Everybody is to pull up to-morrow at eleven o'clock." He looked then at the sky and at the coffee-colored water creeping over the low places of the land, and added, grimly, "It will be a hard road—but we'll get there."

In a mood of royal expectancy, I called the servant who took care of John, my horse, the noblest of his kind.<sup>1</sup> "Groom him now, and feed him well. He will have heavy work to do for me to-morrow." And I sat till night fell watching that what I ordered was done.

General Paine, if my recollection serves me, commanded General Smith's First Brigade; anyhow, by

<sup>1</sup> I loved this horse passionately. For five years he was my faithful, intelligent servant and friend; and in all that time there was never an hour in which I would not have gone hungry and thirsty if, by so doing, it had been possible to have saved him. He was in my mind when, long afterwards, in *The Wooing of Malkatoon*, I wrote these lines:

But Othman waved them off: "Bring me my horse.  
But yesterday from noon to set of sun  
He kept the shadow of the flying hawk  
A plaything 'neath his music-making feet.  
I will not comrade else."

Tent born and bred,  
The steed was brought, its hoofs like agate bowls,  
Its breast a vast and rounded hemisphere,  
With lungs to gulf a north wind at a draught.  
Under its forelock, copious and soft  
As tresses of a woman loosely combed,  
He set a kiss, and in its nostrils breathed  
An exhalation, saying, to be heard  
By all around, "Antar, now art thou brute  
No longer. I have given thee a soul,  
Even my own."

And as he said, it was,  
And not miraculously, as the fool  
Declares; for midst the other harmonies  
By Allah wrought, the hero and his horse  
Have always been as one.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ten o'clock in the forenoon next day the second division stood to arms.

At eleven o'clock the advance-guard, preceded by a detail of horse, took a road—there was but one—the division following, my brigade in the lead. The general trend was parallel with the river at our left. Occasionally a gun-boat abreast of us, suspicious of the shore ahead, would send a tentative shell into the woods; whereat the toilers in the columns cheered. Suddenly—somewhere between twelve and one o'clock—we were startled by the report of a heavy gun up the river. I could see nothing of the river up or down; yet I knew that the leading boat, the flag-ship probably, had turned the corner of Panther Island, and found itself in instant engagement with the fort. I could fancy them, then, the four in armor, one by one rounding the island, giving space to the left as they made the turn, in line directly, and moving forward, bow on, firing—firing, for that matter, while the manœuvre was in progress.

In a short time the ships passed us. I could tell that by the firing. Then they increased their speed. Presently they were between us and the fort—that we knew because the shells of the latter, over-elevated, sailed roaring and screaming into the tree-tops, darkening the air with fragments of limbs. Indeed, the margin separating us from the line of hostile fire was at times preciously narrow, but the effect was to energize everybody in the march. Did a sheet of backwater spread itself across the road, or a bog intrude, or a tree, no matter—there was a cheer, and a rush, and the obstacle lay behind. I can shut my eyes now, and, thinking back through the years as through a mist, hear Pete Wood's Minnesingers <sup>1</sup> halloo their guns through a swamp with-

<sup>1</sup> Battery A, Chicago.

out the loss of an inch of interval. Much I doubt if there ever was a march distinguished like that one; for what with the cannonading of the fleet and that of the fort, the interchange became an almost unintermittent thunder which the ponderous missiles in flight converted into an infernalism indescribably awful. And to make the situation more peculiar, we could see nothing of the fight on the river—to us hastening through the woods, it was all smoke, sound, and fury. The most we could assure ourselves was that somebody was getting hurt.

An hour and a half thus—hell on the water, herculean effort on our part. Once we stopped to improvise a bridge by which to pass our guns. At last we were approaching Heiman. In a turn of the road the height had been seen. General Smith was riding with me.

“Halt?” he said, pulling rein and listening. “The firing has stopped.”

So it had.

I suggested pushing on with a regiment. He peremptorily refused.

On a little farther a horseman from the front rode to him and reported Heiman evacuated.

“How do you know?”

And the soldier answered, “I have been in.”

“The devil!”

Then the general turned to me.

“It is just as well. Move on and take possession.”

Thinking how curiously downright hard fighting was always escaping me, or I it, I rode over an earthwork on the height, and by chance drew rein before the door of a tent circular in form, sixteen feet in diameter, with three feet of wall, above which all was the Sibley tent doubled.<sup>1</sup> I

<sup>1</sup> This tent, in fair condition, is now hanging from a peg in the



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

dismounted and passed in. By the centre-pole stood a table with papers on it in careless heaps, a glance at which told me that Colonel Heiman had headquarters here. I put a gentleman of my staff in charge of the papers, and went on into a marquee adjoining where an agreeable surprise awaited me. Dinner was ready. I looked into a kettle yet boiling and discovered a block of fresh pork "done to a turn." By the kettle a pot simmered, spraying the air with the aroma of coffee. A pone of corn-bread freshly baked adorned a bench near by, and under the lid of a mess-box rudely constructed a little runmaging disclosed salt, pepper, vinegar, and white sugar in lump. General Smith, upon invitation, came and shared my good-fortune. The absence of Colonel Heiman was never more sincerely regretted. Out of a small contribution foraged from General Smith's right pistol-holster we drank the excellent German's health.

Before sitting down to the meal, I took a survey of the post we had so easily won. Though unfinished, a stiff fight could have been made from it. From a parapet on the east side I looked at Fort Henry, across the swelling flood of the Tennessee within easy cannon range. The stars and stripes flew out lazily from the stump of a flag-staff. The salient angle of the water-bastion seemed submerged. Smoke in clouds rolled away from the ruins of what had been the barracks, and men in blue swarmed through the works. A few hundred yards off lay the four black gun-boats which had done the chore of conquest, apparently none the worse for the fierce affray. Up the river, vanishing round a bend,

attic of my home in Crawfordsville. It has sheltered me many times since its capture in fishing and hunting excursions.

I may also remark that I indulge in this description with the less compunction, having on two subsequent occasions been made the victim of somewhat similar despoilment.

## LEW WALLACE

Phelps, with the tin-clads, was hastening under press of steam to materialize the victory, by opening the greater waterway into the heart of the offending Confederacy.

After dinner a soldier brought in a bag, tied, not locked.

"Mail," he said; "just found."

I had him cut the string and empty the contents upon a table. They were letters unopened; the carrier had doubtless delivered them, then fled. I gave them to an officer for examination. Along towards evening he reported:

"There is nothing here of military importance. But"—his voice softened—"look at these. My mother might have written them to me. There are the same prayers in them for their side which we hear for our side—prayers, too, to the same God. I would like to know what you think of them."

And I replied, after having gone through them: "I acknowledge myself wiser for a new lesson. The people of the South believe they have a Cause; and certainly every one of them who is in the field soldiering for that Cause must be respected; he may be misguided, but he must be honest."

From that hour I have not ceased to act upon that principle.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XLIV

Lieutenant-Commander Phelps and the *Conestoga*—Grant's council of war—McClelland—The attack on Donelson decided—Left behind—Major Ross makes a suggestion—In readiness to join Grant—The night-watch.

GENERAL SMITH was called to Fort Henry the afternoon of its fall; whereupon the command at Heiman devolved on me.

There had been some mysterious things about the disappearance of my predecessor in possession,<sup>1</sup> so, in ordinary caution, I had my cavalry out testing the roads for miles, while scouting-parties of infantry poked into the woods and thickets of the vicinity. Then, discovering nothing to make me uneasy, I sat down to wait for the next lesson in grand strategy. Where would it take us? Up the river? Or across to Dover, the little old shire town of Stewart County, Tennessee, to-day better known in history as Fort Donelson?

One has to be a long time in army life before he learns the high art of graceful waiting. The river filled the wide gorge between Heiman and Henry brimful, an angry, seething, yellow lake safe only for steamboats. Morning and evening guns called to us from the other side, and were answered regularly. Though the weather continued warm, even springlike, the air hung thick with moisture, admonishing me that winter could not

<sup>1</sup> Not until after the collapse at Fort Donelson did I learn that Colonel Heiman had gone over to that stronghold, and taken a very creditable part in its defence.

be far away, and that the campaign must go on whether the flowers bloomed or Boreas blew, it was mine to see to the efficiency of my men. Inspections were the orders of the day, in quarters, close and more business than ceremonial, and I signed requisitions on the quartermaster freely for blankets, shoes, and overcoats.

The second duty of a general is to his command—such has been the teaching of my veteran friend and instructor at Paducah, and now I was trying to do honor to the recollection. And in truth I found great peace of mind in seeing the “boys” look comfortable and ready as possible for the worst change the season had in store.

As I was still of the Second Division, General Smith’s officers came over occasionally to see me, bringing news of which every hint of remotest relation to the next step forward was especially welcome.

Flag-Officer Foote, they told me, had gone back with his heavy iron-clads to Cairo. What for? *Repairs*, they said, winking. Then, according to habit, I put this and that together, with conclusion that the gallant old conventicler, having done the Confederacy all the mischief in sight on the Tennessee River, would appear next in the Cumberland, signifying Donelson, of course.

A few days later I heard from my friend, Lieutenant-Commander Phelps. He had returned from his sweeping reconnoissance up the Tennessee to Florence at the foot of the Shoals. He told of bridges destroyed, of supplies in store burned, of transports beached and sunk, of a Union sentiment yet alive, and of lovers of the old flag in numbers to take care of themselves if only they had arms. I wrote him my congratulations, and regrets at not having been with him.

I heard also of reinforcements in energetic rush to



our assistance. Encouraging, certainly, and of effect to awaken interest and inquiry into what the enemy was doing. Of him, however, but little could be had. General Johnston had been jolted hard by the fall of Fort Henry, and in acknowledgment of the blow had withdrawn his headquarters from Bowling Green, Kentucky, to Nashville. Indeed, it was not difficult for me to fancy, tyro as I was, that the very length of his line of defence, stretching from Columbus to Cumberland Gap round by Nashville and Bowling Green, was crowding the nights of the trained soldier with anxieties lest it turn to gossamer breakable at a breath of strenuous war. That he should be speeding reinforcements to Donelson could be guessed. If he failed in defence of that place, if it went the way of Fort Henry, Nashville was lost to him; then, the Tennessee open to Florence, where should the fox find its next hole? <sup>1</sup>

Fort Henry was surrendered on February 6th. On the 10th, if I mistake not, an orderly crossed the river with a note for me, sealed, informal, but very interesting. There would be, it said, a meeting of general officers at headquarters next day. Time—two o'clock, afternoon. My presence was desired.

This, I saw, meant a council of war. How often had I read of such affairs in books of war! Now I was to see one and have a voice in it.

I took a skiff, and set out for headquarters in the

<sup>1</sup> Even with Donelson safe, it is doubtful if General Johnston could have remained at Nashville; for with the Tennessee open both places were practically turned. In fact, I can think of no military problem more interesting to a student than the consequences of the withdrawal by the Confederate leader at this time of all his forces to a point south of the Tennessee. That he worried with the problem there can be no doubt; and I have often thought him deterred from such a course by the idea of risking the life of his Cause upon one battle, an Armageddon, say at Chattanooga or Corinth.

forenoon to give myself a look at Fort Henry. The devastation astonished me all the more when I recalled the short time in which it had been accomplished. Theretofore shot and shell, though in ammunition-boxes, had seemed mere harmless toys; now the awful force latent in them was demonstrated. When in the water-bastion, by the disabled columbiad which Tilghman had served to the last with his own hands, I could not refuse him my admiration.

General Grant had his headquarters, as I now recollect, on the steamboat *Tigress*. Getting to and from it was easy. Not an armed sentinel could be seen on the landing or on the vessel. Of military state there was none—that had gone out, it pleased me to remark, with the illustrious “Pathfinder.”

I found my own way into the ladies’ cabin. A section of the dinner-table and a few chairs completed the furnishment. General Grant was there, of course. Rawlins, his adjutant-general, sat at the table. I can also recall the presence of Generals Charles F. Smith and John A. McClernand. There were two or three others whom I cannot name.

It struck me that the company were in icy binding; probably because, like myself, they were mostly new to the business. Our uniforms and swords, worn in compliance with etiquette, may have had to do with the frigidity of the occasion. General Smith came to me and asked how we were getting along at Heiman; aside from that there was not the slightest pretence of sociability, no introductions, no bowing, no hand-shaking, no conversation.

After little, General Grant stepped to the table and said, ever so quietly: “The question for consideration, gentlemen, is whether we shall march against Fort Donelson or wait for reinforcements. I should like to

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

have your views." He looked first at General Smith—we were all standing—and Smith replied, "There is every reason why we should move without the loss of a day." General McClelland, taking the sign next, drew out a paper and read it. He, too, was in favor of going at once. It had been better for him, probably, had he rested with a word to that effect;<sup>1</sup> as it was, he entered into details of performance; we should do this going and that when we were come. The proceeding smacked of a political caucus, and I thought both Grant and Smith grew restive before the paper was finished; then, as if in haste to preclude argument instantly that the reading ended, Grant turned to me, nodding, and I said, "Let us go, by all means; the sooner the better." Fast as called on, then, the others responded yes. I noticed Rawlins making note of the expressions as they were given. Finally, General Grant wound the meeting up by saying: "Very well, gentlemen, we will set out immediately. Orders will be sent you. Get your commands ready."

This, to my knowledge, was the only council of war General Grant ever called. That the opinions submitted had any influence with him is hardly supposable. There is evidence that he had already determined upon the movement.

At Heiman, to which I returned upon the closing of the council, notice was given me in the night of the 12th that the advance against Fort Donelson would begin in the morning. This, of course, did not surprise me, but when the same messenger put into my hand

<sup>1</sup> The unpleasantness between Grant and McClelland became notorious; and I have sometimes thought that on the part of the former it had origin in the reading of that paper. The assumptions in connection with the matter, were noticeable, and could hardly fail to be offensive to a superior officer.

an order designating me to be left behind, my disappointment may be imagined; nor could I wring soothing out of the circumstance that command of the two posts, Henry and Heiman, was intrusted to me, except that as base of the operation in hand it had to be held in safety. Thinking to facilitate communication with the front, I recrossed the river at daylight, and established headquarters in a steamboat there, taking two companies of infantry over with me.

February 12th is remembered as a day of summer. River, land, and sky fairly shimmered with warmth. Overcoats were encumbrances. Yet the balm and beauty only aggravated the chagrin I could not help feeling at being left behind. After posting the companies to the best advantage, the object being to take care of the public property, I called my staff together, and from camp-stools on the hurricane-deck of the boat we watched the happier fellows of the divisions, McClermand's and Smith's, form, drop into column, and march away, flags flying, drums beating. By noon the last detachment of them had disappeared.

In full belief that our brigade was at least the equal of the best in the outgoing columns, the group around me on the deck shared my feeling, and were melancholy enough—Kneffler, Lyman, Pope, Ross, and Ware, all so young, enthusiastic, and full of life and ambition. One of them still lingers—a gray old reminder like myself.

These began talking about the prospects of taking Donelson, when a presentation by Ross, who was an officer of unusual capacity and information, interested me.

"There are not force of men enough," he said; "and unless he gets reinforcements, I look for Grant to come back."

One of the party challenged the remark.

"Well," Ross returned, "let us see. First, he is



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

going against fortifications, and should have three to one at least, though I would feel that much better had he five. He is going, too, without siege-guns. The roads, you know, are so bad that the guns of that class are still on the boat yonder. In the next place, if we divide the reported strength of the enemy by two, there are eighteen thousand men, if not twenty thousand, behind the works, which are said to be scientifically built—that is, so many to our fifteen thousand.”

“Oh, we have more than that, certainly.”

Ross drew out a pocket memorandum-book.

“Let us see again,” he said, computing as he read. “McClernand’s division, the first, is of three brigades, of which the first, Oglesby’s, has five regiments of infantry, five companies cavalry, and two batteries; the second, W. H. L. Wallace’s, is of four regiments infantry, one of cavalry, and two batteries; the third, Morrison’s, is of two regiments infantry only. Going then to the second division, Smith’s, it has three brigades, of which the first, MacArthur’s, has three regiments of infantry; the third—there is no second—Cook’s, has five regiments of infantry and three batteries; the fourth, Lauman’s, is of four regiments of infantry and a company of sharp-shooters.<sup>1</sup> Now, giving six hundred men as the average of the infantry regiments, eighty to a cavalry company, and one hundred and fifty to a battery, there is in round numbers a total of fifteen thousand men. Then, turning to me, Ross asked, “Now what do you think of it?”

“Where did you get all that?” I inquired.

“As to our own division, Smith’s, we are all posted. Then as to the other—well, I spent yesterday afternoon in McClernand’s camps.”

<sup>1</sup>[There was a Fifth Brigade, Colonel Morgan L. Smith commanding, composed of the Eleventh Indiana and Eighth Missouri.]

"Very well, I'll answer you. Let us go to the cabin."

They followed me below, and stood a round while I prepared a note for sending.

"It is my opinion," I then said, "that before twelve hours we will be ordered to Donelson. If there is a soldier in command there, he will meet General Grant on the road going, and fight him in the open. At all events, the general will find it difficult to surround eighteen thousand men—saying there are no more—eighteen thousand behind works with fifteen thousand. I think he will make that discovery this afternoon. The order may come to-night, and be urgent. Anyhow, we'll get ready." Lyman was quartermaster, so I turned to him. "Here, go and have four boats steamed up ready at a moment's notice to cross to Heiman and bring the brigade over. I want but one trip. You understand?" Then I spoke to Ross. "Here is a note, and, as you are responsible for this excitement, take and deliver it. It reads"—and they all gathered closer to me—

"HEADQUARTERS, SECOND BRIGADE, SECOND DIVISION,  
"ARMY OF TENNESSEE, *February 12, 1862.*

"COLONEL MORGAN L. SMITH,—I think it very likely we will be wanted over at Donelson to-morrow, and the need of us may be urgent. Be ready to go in haste. Get the regiments out, and have arms stacked in the company streets. Wood should keep his horses harnessed while standing at their picket ropes. Issue three days' rations of coffee and bread. Boats will come to bring you all at one trip. The cavalry will be left in charge of the post and property. Yours,

"LEW WALLACE, Brigadier-General Commanding."

The afternoon and evening, and on far into the night, I spent on the deck of the boat listening. Its captain, intensely Union, passed the time with me.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"We ought to be hearing from *them* now," he said once; "the wind is whisking round."

"Whisking? Which way?" I asked.

"To the north."

"God forbid!" I said. "Our people have gone over there without tents, most of them without overcoats."

A shiver shook me.

Within half an hour, sure enough, clouds shut out the stars, and a wind of strength, with snow on its wings, blew directly from the north. Still I kept the deck, so strong the fascination of the work in progress. Occasionally we heard, or fancied we heard, the report of guns in the distance.

"There!" and the captain sprang to his feet. "That's one! They're at it!"

And it did seem so.

## XLV

Encamped at Dover—Ordered to Donelson—Mrs. Crisp's house—Grant's headquarters—Report to Grant—Assigned to centre position in the line of battle—Separated from the Eleventh Regiment—Lunch with Grant—Thayer.

My disappointment was indescribably keen when the night of the 12th and all the 13th passed uneventfully to us. Nothing from the front, only rumors of the most unreliable "grape-vine" variety. Nevertheless, I availed myself of the do-nothing condition to look out a little for myself. Why not? That is, I seized two wagons of four mules each. In the first I put the Heiman tent, a stout dry-goods box containing a mattress, a pillow-case, and three genuine blankets. But as they did not fill the body of one of the roomy vehicles, I completed the load of both with cartridge-boxes. Lyman superintended, and I may anticipate by saying here that no luckier forethought ever befell a veteran, much less a first campaigner—a remark which may be safely left to the outcome.

The night of the 14th I went to bed, lamp burning, boots on. About one o'clock a sergeant of the guard awoke me to announce a courier from the front, and directly the courier put into my hand a sealed envelope which I opened and eagerly read, first glancing at the signature—John A. Rawlins, Assistant Adjutant-General. It was the expected order, and, minus the usual caption, read very nearly: "You will report here immediately, bringing your brigade. Leave



guards at Forts Heiman and Henry—a strong one at the latter.”

Very seldom in my life have there been instances in which my signature has been given more willingly than to the receipt for that bit of paper.

Within five minutes everybody of military connection with me was up and booted and spurred. The boat resounded with the stamping of horses going ashore.

In ten minutes three steamboats were casting off and swinging into the river bound for Fort Heiman; Ross having already taken one with him, the transportation required for the ferriage of the troops was ample.

By three o'clock hundreds of little fires along the shadow-browned shore were pouring streams of sparks on the fitful wind. The brigade, shorn of its cavalry, had arrived and disembarked, and was making coffee; and one had only to listen to know how glad the men were, especially Pete Wood's children of the guns, the Minnesingers. They jollied rag-time cantatas in the teeth of the biting wind—sang while easing the brassy tubes of their much petted guns down the narrow gang-planks. Ah, I thought, if an enemy ever starts covetously for those guns, what a merry time he will have getting them!

With a pang of regret very distinctly remembered, I left the Twenty-third Indiana to garrison Fort Henry. The order was received with a tremendous howl which I pretended not to hear. Then, day beginning to break, the marching commands fell into column—the Eighth Missouri, then Battery A, then the Eleventh Indiana—to whom, one not more than another, the twelve miles to Donelson would be little more than a wholesome constitutional to a vigorous man.

As I was taking to horse, the captain of the boat came up with a half-bushel basket in hand.

"Here," he said to me, "is my contribution to the Cause—sandwiches, chicken and ham, bread, coffee in bottles, boiled eggs, a layer of pies, and a jorum or two."

"For me or the hospital?" I asked.

"For you and yours—and down in the bottom, good luck, good luck!"

He deserved the grateful hand-shake he got. Then I called Johnson, my servant, and put the basket in his charge, and him in the first wagon with the other property.

"Don't take your eyes off those things till I call for them. Hear, eh?"

I turned to business then with the assured sense of all right peculiar to men who know whence their next meal is coming.

Once in motion by the Telegraph road, chosen because of its better reputation, the men afoot pushed on with the genuine free step habitual to the trained Zouave, indifferent to mud and glazing pool. Ears and noses flamed like patches of red flannel, and occasionally eyes blinked to the flying frost-flakes; but the spirit was irrepressible. They sang striding on, and cheered; and more than once, looking back, I was conscious of a wish, hazy and undefined, to see that aggregation deployed in front of something impossible, with an order to charge—this never dreaming how soon the wish was to pass into actual trial.

At a point nearly half-way to Donelson, I changed from the Telegraph road into the Dover road; after which, favored by the wind, the pulsing sound of cannon became more frequent and distinct. After while we fell in with a patrol of horsemen whose offer of guidance I accepted. The chief regaled me with news, saying, among other things, that the army was in posi-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

tion, McClernand on the right, Smith on the left; that there had been heavy fighting the day before, McClernand having undertaken to effect a lodgment in the enemy's outwork; that he had been repulsed with loss;<sup>1</sup> that the enemy was being heavily reinforced from up the river; that we would be right welcome—he knew it, because everybody was beginning to think Grant had a worse Johnny's nest to deal with than he had first supposed. By cross-examination, however, I drew one large crumb of comfort from the gentleman; in effect, that a big reinforcement was then just below Dover, with Foote and his conquering gun-boats.

Near eleven o'clock we came to a house which our patrolman said belonged to a Mrs. Crisp; he also vouchsafed the information that just then General Grant was using it for headquarters; whereupon I became interested in the abode—enough at least, to note that it was a poor, little, unpainted, clap-boarded affair of the "white trash" variety, of logs, and a story and a half, with a lean-to on the side of our approach, half-room and half-porch. Smoke poured from the chimney, giving a guarantee of comfort within. Nor did I fail to observe the array of orderlies in the environment, and the herd of picketed horses, and the coming and going of officers and other orderlies, the whole signifying business in a flush verging on heat.

My bugler, at a word, sounded "Halt." Other buglers down the column near and far repeated the call; and, in dismounting, it delighted me that the Eighth, instead of breaking ranks and throwing themselves down as the tired and undisciplined always do, closed files and grimly stood at order arms. I needed no messenger from McGinnis to tell me the Eleventh was doing the

<sup>1</sup> This was the very gallant but unsuccessful assault by Colonel Morrison upon the middle redoubt of the Confederate intrenchments.

same. Of course, the eyes of the unoccupied were ours, and the impression was all one-sided.

I made way to the porch, and through a crowd into the cabin. The aides, Lagow and Hillyer, were standing before an old-style country fireplace, large and with logs blazing in a bed of coals. They were sworded for duty, and touched their caps. General Grant stood by a table moved out into the middle of the room, dictating something to Captain Rawlins, who was seated, back to me, writing. Colonel Webster looked on near by listening. Now and then the report of cannon, no longer in the distance, beat in with startling force.

I took off my cap and stood waiting. The general noticed me with a nod, but went on with Rawlins. When through, he came to me and said, pleasantly, but without offering a hand, "Good-morning, general, I did not expect you before two o'clock."

"I knew you would send for me," I replied, "and made ready in advance."

He gave me a quick glance, and smiled.

"What did you leave at Heiman?" he next asked.

"My cavalry."

"And at Henry, what?"

"The Twenty-third Indiana."

He turned to Rawlins. "Note that."

For the life of me, I could not tell whether he approved or disapproved. Then he continued, "You bring with you, I understand, the Eleventh Indiana and the Eighth Missouri?"

"Yes, and Battery A, Chicago," I answered.

"That is right. We are a little short in artillery." He looked at Rawlins again. "Is the order for General Wallace ready?"

"Not yet," the captain replied.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"It makes no difference. General Wallace will no doubt accept it verbally."

"Certainly."

He fixed his gray eyes on me, and asked, "Who is your next officer?"

"Colonel Morgan L. Smith."

"Very well. Tell Colonel Smith to march the Eighth and the Eleventh and report with them to General Charles F. Smith."

This, be it said, was a shock. There was separation in the words. The gray eyes were on me.

"And the battery?" I asked, steadily as I could.

"That you will keep."

And thereupon, not being able to see a brigadier's command in a battery, though composed of Minnesingers, I knew there was something behind.

"Give me attention now," the general said, almost without pause. "There are some regiments coming up from the river. They should be here by one o'clock." He took a paper from the table. "Here's a list of them." He read, and then said: "They will form the Third Division of the Army of the Tennessee, and you are assigned to command it. You had better take the list."

I took it from him.

"You will notice," he continued, "that the ranking colonels are there given, Thayer, of the First Nebraska, and Cruft, of the Thirty-first Indiana. They will command brigades. If I am mistaken, and somebody else is senior, you will make the correction when not so pressed for time. Just as soon as the organizing is finished, you will take position in the centre of the line, with McClernand on your right and Smith on your left. Your part will be to hold the centre, and resist all attempts of the enemy to break through. You must not

assume the aggressive. Those are your orders. It is about noon, isn't it?" he asked Webster.

And Webster answered, "A little after, I think."

"Very well." And again turning to me, and unbending somewhat, the general said: "You will lunch with me. Bring the gentlemen of your staff."

"Smith will need a guide," I said.

"Certainly. Something for you, Lagow."

The captain stepped forward with alacrity; and, taking his hat from the table, the general followed me out on the porch, where, after I had communicated with Colonel Smith and collected my staff-officers, he stood till the last file of the column passed before him. And the passing was as if on parade. There was no cheering. Most likely, he was unrecognized.

Then, as we went back into the house, General Grant said, quietly: "The brigade, you know, belongs to Smith's division. I understand why you don't like to part with it."

I had tried not to flinch, but he had seen through me.

The lunch was had in the room adjoining that doing duty as office—a bedroom. I took it. A plain board laid on two chairs served as table. Some biscuit, hard as ice, beans boiled with flitches of salt pork, hot coffee, and pickled cucumbers, acid enough to parboil the throat, constituted the fare. There were no apologies; then *sans cérémonie*—and I saw no one stand back.

It is true the dishes partaken of at that lunch were neither numerous nor rich; to make it memorable, however, it had what I had never heard before—armies in battle for orchestra, and intermittent cannonading for music.

By-and-by the troops were reported approaching from the river, which meant the division intended for me. I hurried out and took position by the road-side with my staff, all mounted.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Then there went by me the Thirty-first Indiana, Colonel Cruft; the Twenty-fifth Kentucky, Colonel Shackelford; eight companies of the Forty-fourth Indiana, Colonel Reed; and the Seventeenth Kentucky, Colonel McHenry. These were assigned as of the first brigade; and calling Cruft out of the column, I gave the command of it to him.<sup>1</sup>

Next in the passage were the First Nebraska, Colonel Thayer; the Seventy-sixth Ohio, Colonel Woods; and the Sixty-eighth Ohio, Colonel Steedman. These were assigned to Colonel John M. Thayer, who, by some misunderstanding, entitled himself "Commanding Third Brigade," instead of the second. In that capacity he made his report after the battle.<sup>2</sup>

The provisional promotions of Cruft and Thayer brought their lieutenant-colonels, Osborne and McCord, to command their regiments.

I found myself then at the head of a division of seven regiments, the total of which we roughly estimated at six thousand men. With a report to that effect, I returned to General Grant, and asked him, as I knew nothing of the country, to give me a guide to my position in the line of investment.

Riding from the back porch of the Crisp house to the head of the column, I put it in motion, thinking, while listening to the guns in lively give and take ahead of me, "Now—now, *certainly*, I will see a great battle."

<sup>1</sup> This assignment was a very pleasant tribute to an acquaintance begun while Colonel Cruft was a student of Wabash College. He arose soon after to be brigadier-general.

<sup>2</sup> The day following, while in action, the Forty-sixth Illinois, Colonel Davis, the Fifty-seventh Illinois, Colonel Baldwin, the Fifty-eighth Illinois, Colonel Lynch, and the Twentieth Ohio, Colonel Whittlesey, reported to me, and, on account of lack of time for other disposition of them, they were given temporarily to Thayer.

XLVI

Take position—Cold weather—Heiman's tent—The captain's basket  
—Foote's defeat—The disabled gun-boats.

THE centre of the line of investment, General McCler-  
nand on my right, General Smith on my left—such was  
the position I was to take.

“You will hold the position to prevent escape of the  
Confederates, without assuming the aggressive”—such  
was the order for my government.

When I requested a guide to show me the position,  
General Grant did me the honor to send his adjutant-  
general with me. It was about two o'clock when the  
column moved, taking what Captain Rawlins called  
the Wynne's Ferry road to Dover. For quite a dis-  
tance a thick wood screened us from view of the enemy,  
but pretty soon we began descending into an open swale;  
then, looking over my left shoulder, I caught sight of  
the fort on a height probably a mile distant.

The Thirty-first Indiana was in lead of the division,  
and instantly that its colors appeared in the open of the  
low ground, the site of the fortification whitened with  
clouds of smoke, of which the roll and volumed outswell  
reminded me of the breaking of spinnaker-sails on rac-  
ing-yachts. Then, in a jiffy, the bellow of the guns  
were upon us, followed by puffs of pallid smoke and  
sharp explosions in the air overhead, which I knew to  
be shells intended for us. And then, too, I knew myself  
under fire, but did not at the moment think of it gravely,  
so intent was I watching how the men took it.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The space to be crossed before reaching cover was three or four hundred yards; seeing which some one suggested double-quicking; instead of that I sent word to Colonel Cruft to set all his drums and fifes going, my argument being that the double-quick would soon degenerate into a run, while inspiring contempt of shells in the beginning was better than demoralizing the men with fear of them. The music began, and the stiffening up was magical. I myself became perfectly conscious of the effect.

Wood, from his place between the brigades, sent one of his officers for permission to go into battery and return the fire, but I forbade it.

The noise of the guns, and their reverberations peculiarly lively at that point, were much alike; but in the diapason my ear quickly separated one report; while always succeeded by a singularly shrill whistling of the missile in passage, the sound resembled that of clapboards clashed against clapboards, or of lumber dropped upon lumber in the unloading of cars. I heard the *voice* often through the siege in the night as well as the day, a rasping dissonance not without a comical touch.<sup>1</sup>

There had been probably a hundred and twenty-five or thirty shells and shot fired at the regiments during that deliberate passage; yet, when we were in position, I rode back to the rear and could not hear of a man hurt. I was careful to have the fact well published.

Captain Rawlins at length stopped, and said: "We have come far enough. Halt here."

"This, then, is the centre of the line?" I asked.

"Practically," he answered.

I looked around. We were on a road, with the ground in declension on the right, but level in front and on our

<sup>1</sup> When, after the surrender, a one-pounder piece was discovered among the guns captured, the mystery was fully explained.

left. A thick wood shut the position in, hiding it from the fort.

"How far away is McClernand?" I inquired of the captain.

"About half a mile."

"And Smith?"

"A little farther—possibly a quarter of a mile."

My surprise was great. I had been thinking of a connected line throughout.

Then I asked: "Suppose I want to communicate with them? I see no road."

"Your messenger must take to the woods."

My astonishment grew apace. "What? Why hasn't the enemy come in here and cut you in two?"

"Because"—and Rawlins laughed—"there's but one soldier among them; and he is third in rank."

"What's his name?"

"Buckner."

"Simon Bolivar? I know him personally. Who are the others?"

"One is Floyd, the other Pillow."

Just then the report of a gun passed sullenly through the woods, and a shell exploded a short distance up the road.

"That is from the fort?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Well, I have the direction. How far off is it?"

"About half a mile."

"And to get by me Mr. Floyd must come through the woods on the left or down this road?"

"Yes."

"I see now why I was sent for; and I thank you for coming with me, captain, and for information. With your permission, I'll get ready."

The captain turned his horse about and rode away,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

saying, "I will see you in the morning, if not sooner."

As a first step, I had the regiments of both brigades broken into column of companies and arms stacked. Then I picketed my front. Small fires were allowed well down the slope at the right, the smoke not to rise above the tree-tops, lest it should attract the attention of the enemy. Officers were warned to keep their men close by, ready to fall in at a word. Then my wagons were brought forward and the tent pitched. The teamsters and Johnson, my servant, were put in charge of it. They were not permitted to build a fire. The snow was all of a couple inches deep on the level; on the south side of the logs it had collected in cadaverous drifts. Frost in specks of glancing sheen still streaked the air. We walked about and beat our bodies to keep up circulation, teeth chattering meanwhile like castanets. Shade of Thor, how cold it was! Yet there was nothing to do but wait and be ready.

At three o'clock, or thereabouts, we were permitted an unexpected diversion. The boom of a gun heavier than any we had yet heard, and farther off, rolled through the woods from down the river.

"A gun-boat," said Kneffler.

Another boom like the first, only nearer. Then an answer, but muffled as by a house on a hill in intervention.

"That was from one of the river batteries," I said.

Two—three guns in the distance—four! Then the batteries—there was no mistaking them—replied in quick succession.

"Foote is on the rampage. It's a battle." And as I spoke my blood ran quicker and warmer.

The wind blew from the north, and the condition of the atmosphere did not lend itself generously to the

conveyance of sound; still the roar of the double eruption, now from battery, now from boat, magnified itself. Then the interchange became an increasing thunder, and we knew the sturdy flag-officer was closing in on his enemy. At times we even fancied hearing shot in impact against armor-plate, whereat we, in safety, mere auditors, felt the flesh crawl upon our bones, and thought how hot it must be down there.

Now nearly everybody, the Confederates, of course, and of ours all in the least possessed of map-knowledge of the locality, understood Foote's object in attacking was not merely to silence the batteries, but get his gun-boats above the fort. Then, the river in his possession as far up as Nashville, the garrison must either fight out of the limbo they were in or surrender. So, if the besieged and the besiegers alike stood at attention, as it were, while the struggle was on; if in the hour and more I did not hear a shot fired along our front; if even the sharp-shooters were quiescent, nothing could be more natural. I remember the little of stir on the part of the men of my division about me in the time, and that when any of them had anything to say it was in a low voice—as if even a whisper were out of order.

The sun made ready to drop behind the western wall, and the wrack continuing, it crept into our bones, slowly blending with the frost already there, that Foote was having a harder time here than at Fort Henry. A dropping-off in his fire was noticed; we hated to admit it, but all at once it quit altogether. We looked at one another like sick men.

"Whipped!" said Kneffler, with a prefix sometimes excusable to the ear but never to the eye.

And it was so.

Then, as there was no telling what the enemy, encouraged by his victory, might attempt in the night, I



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

busied myself making ready for him. The picket reserves were strengthened and deployments provided for. Low fires near the arms in stack were allowed.

The big Heiman tent proved a welcome refuge, and, with my staff, I heaped blessings on the captain of the steamboat. While we were sounding the depths of his basket, I remembered, with a wrench of spirit, that my horse had gone since early morning without a drop of water or a bite of food. I reproached myself bitterly. It had been so easy to have dropped a bag of oats in one of the wagons! A teamster came to my help with a capful of shelled corn. Then, in place of water, the noble brute was given a long tether that he might make the most of the snow. Hard, truly!

And from pitying the horse my sympathy went out to the men. By that affinity which always lies coiled up in a great common cause, though strangers, they were brethren. I got up often in the night and looked out at them around the insufficient fires, dark groups wrapped in blankets. Once I joined a party of them. They recognized the uniform, and, by giving way, silently invited me to come in and warm.

"It's cold, boys," I said, rubbing my hands over the struggling blaze.

"Yes," one of them answered, half jocularly, "my father has his pigs all tucked away in good, sweet straw."

"I came out to comfort you," I rejoined.

"Have you a feather-bed apiece for us?"

They laughed.

"No, but seeing there is no place to lay the beds unless in the snow, I have something better. Is it any lighter, do you think, on the fellows over there in the trenches? If you are cold, how much warmer are they?"

I had evoked the right principle.

## LEW WALLACE

"That's so. If they had stayed at home and behaved themselves, we wouldn't be here."

There was an expletive with the speech which is left out.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Foote, in attacking, moved in two lines; the first, composed of the *St. Louis* (flag-ship), *Pittsburg*, and *Louisville*, all armored; the second, of the *Conestoga*, *Tyler*, and *Lexington*, all unarmored. The *Carondelet* seems to have served as a free-lance in the fight. Of the other part, there were two batteries, upper and lower, armed with twenty heavy guns, to which the boats could return compliments with but twelve. The batteries had the further advantage of being on a hill-side, at a height enabling them to reach the decks of the vessels, their most vulnerable points. Yet Foote advanced to within four hundred yards of his enemy. Once he drove the gunners out of the upper battery. At the end of more than an hour of incessant battle, the *Louisville* was disabled, and drifted down the river. The *St. Louis* was soon after in the same condition; and a little later the *Pittsburg* and *Carondelet* fell into desperate straits and the fight was over. The calamity happened just when the gun-boats were about to pass the fort into the river above it.

## XLVII

John, the horse—McClermand falls back in disorder—A precarious position—Major Brayman—A panic—Rawlins—The rout turned—Colonel W. H. L. Wallace—Wood's battery.

THE morning of the 15th crawled up the eastern sky as a turtle in its first appearance after hibernation crawls up a steep bank. Just before it shook out its first faint signs of life, I went out to look after my horse John. Poor fellow! The blanket I had loaned him helped comfort him; but he had lapped up all the snow in the circle of his tether, and *that*, not to speak of the appeal in his eyes, told me how he suffered for water. I had about made up my mind to take chances and have an orderly lead him back to the first running stream, when an unusual sound off to the right front of my position attracted me. I listened. The sound broke at a jump into what was easily recognizable as a burst of musketry. What was it? Who was making it over there? I stepped to the tent, pulled the flaps of the door aside, and said: "Wake, gentlemen, and come out. There's something for you."

They came in haste.

"Listen!" I said.

By that time the sound had swelled into a—well, I could think of nothing so much like it as fire-crackers in barrels wasting their Christmas music in simultaneous explosion.

"What do you think of it?" I asked.

One of them thought it McClernand assaulting the works.

"No," I replied, "the fort is here more to our front."

Then Ross said, "The Johnnies are out pitching into McClernand."

In a little while guns joined in.

"There! That settles it," I said. "Get out your horses. It looks as if we were to have it in boat-loads to-day."

Meantime, the blanketed groups about the fires were astir and listening.

John was brought me, and I rode to Cruft and Thayer. Both were directed to have their men breakfast and stand by their arms. Cruft was told to call in his extra guard details.

At my tent again, I borrowed a capful of corn for John, and, while he was eating, the ever-handy basket surrendered its contents, and we were content to take our coffee out of the bottles cold.

By the time we were through the noise over at the right had swollen in volume, until it bore likeness to a distant train of empty cars rushing over a creaking bridge.

Then the absence of the cavalry, in idleness on the height of Heiman, struck me regretfully. Here was a rare chance to make them useful. In twenty minutes they could have informed me of what was happening to the first division. As it was, my orders were to be respected—that is, there was nothing for me but to keep my place, letting come what might.

The situation was very trying. Questions thronged in on me, all the output of imagination, but not less confusing on that account.

What, for instance, if the enemy had received rein-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

forcements from Nashville in the night, making him once more superior to us in numbers? What if the demonstration at the moment going on over in McClernand's zone of investment were but a feint, leaving me or General Smith on my left the real object of impending attack?

I tried, next, to anticipate what might come round to me. To get at my position there were but two directions from which an assault could come; they were by the road in my front and through the woods at my left. This simplified the situation amazingly, and left me to decide the tactics proper in both eventualities, which was "a short horse soon curried."

These things anticipated and determined on, I fancied myself ready—something, to my mind, as needful to a commander as having his command ready—indeed, I am not sure but it is of first importance.

The noise kept grinding on without lull or intermission. An hour—two hours—would it never end? The suspense became torturous. At last a horseman galloped up from the rear. He gave me the name of Brayman, major and assistant adjutant-general.

"I am from General McClernand," he said, "sent to ask assistance of you. The general told me to tell you the whole rebel force in the fort massed against him in the night. Our ammunition is giving out. We are losing ground. No one can tell what will be the result if we don't get immediate help."

A dilemma this, and a serious one. I explained my orders to Major Brayman, and then despatched Lieutenant Ware at speed to the Crisp house for permission to help McClernand. This was about eight o'clock.

In good time Ware returned, and reported General Grant on board the gun-boat *St. Louis*, in conference with Flag-Officer Foote. Nobody at headquarters felt

authorized to act on my request. Major Brayman left me. The battle, meantime, roared on.

Afterwhile a second messenger came from General McClernand, Colonel ———, a gray-haired man in uniform. His news could hardly be worse, and he spoke with tears in his eyes.

"Our right flank is turned," he said. "The regiments are being crowded back on the centre. We are using ammunition taken from the dead and wounded. The whole army is in danger."

My impulse had been to send help at the first asking; that impulse was now seconded by judgment. Disaster to the first division meant exactly what Colonel ——— had said. If that division were rolled back on me, a panic might ensue. In the absence of the commanding general, the responsibility was mine. A regiment was not enough to meet the demand. The colonel had come attended by a younger man whose name has slipped me, and I said, "Tell General McClernand that I will send him my first brigade with Colonel Cruft. I will retain this gentleman to serve as guide."

Thereupon I hastened to Colonel Cruft, and, after explanation, ordered him to take his command rapidly as possible and report to General McClernand.<sup>1</sup> Cruft

<sup>1</sup> As an indication of the character of the man, General McClernand's report of his part in the capture of Fort Donelson is a very remarkable paper.

For example, he says in that report: "The Seventeenth Kentucky, Thirty-first Indiana, and Twenty-fifth Kentucky, commanded by Colonel Charles Cruft, coming up between nine and ten o'clock, A.M., was hailed by members of my staff with encouraging words, and formed as a reserve in the rear of the Twenty-ninth, Eighth and Thirtieth (Illinois). The Forty-fourth Indiana, Colonel H. B. Reed, followed about an hour after, and formed in the rear of the Thirty-first." From this it would appear that the importunities of McClernand's first messenger and the tears of his second meant merely that their chief was not in need, except of a reserve.

In return for one-half of my command sent him, to say nothing

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

acted promptly, and moved off through the woods under direction of the guide.

This left me only Thayer's brigade and the Minnesingers, whom I joined. Afterwhile Captain Rawlins came out to me, and I gave him an account of the messengers from General McClernand, and of what I had done with Cruft.

While we talked, stragglers from the fight appeared coming on the run up a half-defined road that dropped with the decline of the ridge we were on and led off to the right. We scarcely noticed the fugitives, so much more were we drawn by the noise behind them. *That* grew in volume, being a compound of shouts and yells, mixed with the rattle of wheels and the rataplan and throbbing rumble of hoofs in undertone.

"What can that be?" Rawlins asked.

"It beats me. But I'll find out," I said.

I called to an orderly, "Ride and see what all that flurry means." And as a suspicion of the truth broke through my wonder, I further bade him: "Don't spare your horse. Quick!"

Then, as Rawlins and I sat waiting, an officer mounted and bareheaded and wild-eyed, rode madly up the

of the responsibility assumed by me in face of orders, General McClernand also says in the same report: "The reinforcement was generously brought forward by Colonel Cruft upon his own responsibility, in the absence of General Wallace, his division commander, in compliance with my request, borne by Major Brayman, assistant adjutant-general of my division." This is not only a repudiation of my sympathy for him in his distress, but is a charge that in a crisis I was absent from my division. Fortunately, Colonel Cruft is a witness in my behalf. In his report of the fight, he says: "... At eight-thirty, A.M., General Wallace's order was received to put the brigade in rapid motion to the extreme right of our line, for the purpose of reinforcing General McClernand's division." See *Rebellion Records*, series 1, vol. vii., p. 243.

road and past us, crying in shrill repetition, "We're cut to pieces!"

Now I had never seen a case of panic so perfectly defined, and it was curious, even impressive. Rawlins, however, was not disposed to view the spectacle philosophically. Jerking a revolver from his holster, he would have shot the frantic wretch had I not caught his hand. He remonstrated with me viciously, but the orderly came back at full speed and with an ominous look on his face.

"What is it?" I asked.

And he said: "The road back there is jammed with wagons, and men afoot and on horseback, all coming towards us. On the plains we would call it a *stampede*."

We looked at each other—Rawlins and I—and there was no need of further question. *The first division was in full retreat.*

"What are you going to do?" he asked.

"There's but one thing I can do."

"What is that?"

"Get this brigade out of the way. If those fellows strike my people, they will communicate the panic."

"Where will you go?"

"To take that way," pointing to the rear, "is to retreat, and carry the panic to General Smith; so I'll go right up this road towards the enemy."

"Good-bye," Rawlins said. "I would go with you, but this thing must be reported."

He rode slowly off, thinking, doubtless, that he might alarm the men whom he must pass if he hurried.

Then, at my word, the drummers beat the long roll. The men took arms. "By the right flank, file left!" And out of column of companies they went so neatly that I asked Thayer where the regiments were from, and he said, "From Buell's army." And, my con-



fidence rising, I said: "Good! Now, right shoulder, shift, and double-quick."

I gave an instant to the coming mob, and, believing from the sound that there would be time to get the last of my regiments clear of it and contagion, I called to my staff and hastened forward.

Cruft, I discovered, had, in his haste, left his pickets to my care, and I sent an officer to assemble them into column. I also discovered that the road by which we were moving veered somewhat to the right of the fort. Then, the woods still covering us, I came upon numbers of men—how many I may not venture to say—in squads, companies, and fractional regiments under lead of officers. Some of them bore regimental colors. They were not in the least panicky—not even in a hurry.

Once I asked, "Where are you from?"

"From the front, where else do you think?" And there was a roar of laughter.

Of another party, a good-sized battalion, I inquired, "What's your regiment, men?"

"Oglesby's. Have you seen him? He's hit."

Still another answered the same inquiry, "McArthur's."

"Where are you going?"

"We're looking for ammunition. Got any?"

And that was the general cry, "Cartridges, cartridges!"

I saw, finally, an officer riding slowly towards me, one leg thrown over the horn of his saddle and four or five hundred men with a flag behind him. I galloped to meet him.

"Good-morning," I said. "May I ask who you are?"

"My name is Wallace," he returned, stopping.

"Oh, you are Colonel W. H. L. Wallace! Well, my name is Wallace."

"Lew Wallace, of the Eleventh Indiana?"

"The same."

We shook hands, he saying: "Our names, and the number of our regiments—mine is the Eleventh Illinois—have been the cause of great profanity in the post-office."

"Mixture of letters, I suppose?"

"Yes."

I noted him hurriedly, a man above medium height, florid in face, wearing a stubby, reddish beard, with eyes of a bluish cast and a countenance grave and attractive.

"I take it, colonel, you are getting out of a tight place."

"Yes, we got out of ammunition."

"That's bad," I said; "but I can help you. Down the road by a big tent, which is mine, and at your service, you will find two wagons. They, too, are mine, and loaded with ammunition. Help yourself, and tell McClernand to do the same."

"Thank you. I will do it."

His men were halted; facing them, he called out in a cheery voice, "Forward."

"A moment, colonel," I said. "Are the enemy following you?"

"Yes."

"How far are they behind?"

Just then the head of my column hove in view. The colonel saw it.

"Are those yours?"

"Yes."

"Well"—his face took on an expression of calculation—"you will about have time to form a line of battle here."

"Is that so? Then please give my men room to come—and good-bye, colonel. I'll see you again."

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

We shook hands and separated.<sup>1</sup>

A word from one so cool and thoughtful as Colonel W. H. L. Wallace was enough. The moment called for action. I saw it with a great jump of the heart, though the necessities of the situation gripped my senses hard. I looked over the ground right and left, and saw the surface open and smooth, then in front, and discovered myself on the brow of a descent, down which the road narrowed as it dipped between walls of brush and low trees of second growth. As a position, the advantages were all mine. And now to get in my line! The Minnesingers in the road, a regiment right of it, another left.

"Ride," I said to Ross, "and tell Pete Wood to come. Tell him he has the right of way, and to stop at nothing."

Ross scarcely took breath before he was gone.

Thayer came up, and I gave him the situation.

"File the First Nebraska to the right, the next regiment to the left. The two will support the battery between them here. Make a second line of your four regiments, and hold it in reserve behind the First Nebraska."

Thayer was quick, yet I helped him. And while we worked, I heard the rattling of wheels and whips crackling like pistols, and, looking back, beheld Pete Wood coming. I have lived long, and seen many things thrilling, but never anything to approach that battery. It drove forward full speed, the horses running low, the riders standing in their stirrups plying their whips, guns

<sup>1</sup> I am sorry to say I never met him again. His light went out at Shiloh, and it was that of a man gallant as one may ever hope to encounter. And here I may as well answer a question often asked. I do not know of any relationship between Colonel W. H. L. Wallace and myself. I do know, however, that I should be very proud did such exist. Had he lived, high rank was just ahead of him. He possessed all the elements of a great soldier.

and caissons bouncing over root and rut like playthings, the men clinging to their seats like monkeys. No shouting—only Wood in front with his sword waving “Forward.” I fancied the trees trembled as the wheels rolled by them; I know the ground shook earthquake-like. Well done, Battery A! Well done, my Minnesingers! You treated me there and then to the most splendid and inspiring spectacle in the repertoire of war. I have not forgotten it—I can never forget it.

And yet not too soon!

For while I watched the amazing advent, down the road in front rifles began to crackle and bullets to sing in the air. I beckoned Wood, and probably shouted, “Hurry, hurry!”

The firing seemed right on us, not fifty paces away. I noticed it extending rapidly, despite the undergrowth, in front of the First Nebraska, and formed a theory respecting the attack. Instead of advancing in line of battle, the enemy had marched up the cramped road in files of four, and, meeting us unexpectedly, were trying to deploy. It was a tactical mistake with a terrible penalty in payment. All we had to do was to ply them with fire. Thayer had then got the First Nebraska and the Fifty-eighth Illinois in line, the former next the road on the right. I gave him a sign. He spoke to McCord, of the First Nebraska. I saw their muskets rise and fall steadily as if on a parade-ground. A volley—and smoke—and after that constant fire at will fast as skilled men could load.

Then Wood arrived, and without slackening speed wheeled his first section into battery right across the road. I heard him shout: “Grape now. Double-shot them, boys!” He could not see the foemen, I knew. But why look for them? Was not their fire sufficient? Almost before the wheels were stationary his guns



opened; a moment more and I lost sight of guns and men in a deepening cloud of smoke. The gallant fellows were doing the right thing. A section on the right of the first one, and on the left a section. Now, indeed, they will be more than men who, only fifty paces off, can deploy into line in face of the First Nebraska and my Minnesingers!

Having time then to give attention to the support on the left of the battery, to my astonishment I found next the guns a company of the Thirty-second Illinois. It did not belong to my command, and how it came there I do not know. It was ready to fight; that was enough. I let the captain (Davidson) alone. The Fifty-eighth I broke half to the rear. As yet its colonel, not having been attacked, had reserved his fire.

This was the moment of the arrival of the Forty-sixth Illinois, Colonel Davis; the Fifty-seventh Illinois, Colonel Baldwin; the Fifty-eighth Illinois, Colonel Lynch; and the Twentieth Ohio, Colonel Whittlesey. The Fifty-eighth Illinois I posted on the left of the Fifty-eighth Ohio; and the pressure being too great to ask about seniority, the other new-comers were thrown into column of regiments, and marched across the road as an additional reserve to Colonel Thayer. The truth is, I did not know anything of the strength of the enemy, or where the brunt of his attack would fall; particularly as firing was audible at a distance on my right, and cannon were beginning to help the assailants in my front. In such a situation I fancied it impossible to have reserves in excess.

The fight was now set, and we were on the defensive. For three-quarters of an hour it went on, confined, strangely enough, to the space covered by the First Nebraska and Battery A. Occasionally Woods, of the Seventy-sixth Ohio, from his position on the right of

the First Nebraska, threw in a volley left oblique. The Confederate artillery, having to fire up-hill, was of no service. Their shot and shells flew over the trees. I would not be understood as speaking lightly of the Confederates. The struggle on their part was to get into line, and in that they were persistent to obstinacy. Twice they quit, then returned to the trial. A third time repelled, they went back to stay. From a height Colonel Cruft saw them retreat pell-mell into their works. General Buckner, however, softens the description. He speaks of the repulse as a "withdrawal without panic, but in some confusion."

When the affair was over our loss struck me most strangely, it was comparatively so trifling—Battery A, three wounded; the First Nebraska, three killed, seven wounded. This was due partly to our advantage of position, and in part to the desultory and up-hill work of the enemy. As to the Confederate loss, I saw dead men in the brush and in the road enough to sicken me. Several of the desperately wounded we picked up and cared for as if they were our own, though the greater number of those unfortunates had been carried off by their comrades.

I lost no time in sending pickets to cover my front; then, quiet restored, congratulations were in order.

Cruft not having reported, a scouting-party found him intact on a height over on the right, which I ordered him to hold. After making connections with him by a line of skirmishers, the division, grown to pretentious proportions, was more carefully established in its position. There we waited. At intervals shells from the fort sailed over our heads and on into the woods; and it was observable that the men received them with jeers and jokes. Nothing *veteranizes* soldiers like a successful fight.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The success, it may as well be admitted, more than gratified me. With a brigade thrust between it and its over-confident pursuers, I had been instrumental in relieving the first division from an imminent peril. And when, next day, Captain Hillyer, aide-de-camp, sent me a note, saying, "*I speak advisedly*. God bless you! You did save the day on the right!" I had no doubt my conduct was fully appreciated at headquarters.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> General McClelland, in his official report, acknowledged that his whole command fell back from the left of their position in the morning four hundred yards, and that I formed a portion of my fresh troops in front of his second line. He then proceeds to rob Lieutenant Wood and Battery A of credit by giving the repulse of the enemy to Captain Taylor, of his division. He even claims the Confederate dead found in the road after the repulse. Nowhere in his report is there a shadow of acknowledgment to me or my division, not even for the ammunition with which his men supplied themselves out of my wagons. All he plausibly can he appropriates to himself.

XLVIII

Before Donelson—General McClelland—The road recovered—The Eleventh regiment reappears—Troops on the hill-side—Cruft and Ross.

I HAD long since learned that proud men in the throes of ill-fortune dislike to have the idle and curious make spectacles of them; especially do they hate condolence; wherefore I refrained from going to take a look at the first division reorganizing in my rear. It seemed to me a good time to attend to my own business.

However, as the town clocks in cities of the country endowed with such luxuries were getting ready to strike three, an officer rode up from the rear, and hearing him ask for me, I went to him.

"Are you General Wallace?" he asked.

"I am—at your service."

"Well," he said, "I am—"

Just then a round shot from the fort, aimed lower than usual, passed, it really seemed, not more than a yard above us. We both "ducked" to it, and when I raised my head almost from my horse's neck the stranger was doing himself the same service. We looked at each other, and it was impossible not to laugh.

"I don't know," he said, jocularly, "in what school you were taught to bow, but that one was well done."

"Yes," I retorted, "mine was nearly as low as yours."

To which he added, "They were both behind time"; meaning that they were given after the ball had passed.

Then he took up his fractured remark.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"I was about to say I am General McClelland."

Now I had known General John A. McClelland by reputation as a Democratic politician. His speeches in Congress had been frequent and creditable. My predilections were all on his side, and I ran him over with interest. His face was agreeable, though weather-beaten and unshaven. The snow light gave his eyes a severe squint. His head was covered with one of the abominable regulation wool hats hooked up at one side. Besides being thin and slightly under average height, he was at further disadvantage by sitting too far back in his saddle, and stooping. We shook hands, and he was giving me the details of his battle of the morning, when General Grant joined us, mounted, and attended by a single orderly. I noticed papers in General Grant's right hand which had the appearance of telegrams, and that he seemed irritated and bothered trying to keep some active feeling down. Of course McClelland and I saluted, and gave him instant attention.

From the hollow in front of my position a dropping fire kept ascending.

"Pickets?" General Grant asked.

"My pickets," I replied.

"They will get over that afterwhile," he remarked; then, seriously: "Foote must go to Cairo, taking his iron-clads, some of which are seriously damaged. We will have to await his return; meantime, our line must be retired out of range from the fort."

He stopped. The idea was detestable to him—bitterly so, and, seeing it, I asked to make a suggestion.

He turned to me with a questioning look.

"We have nobody on the right now," I said, "and the road to Clarksville is open. If we retire the line at all, it will be giving the enemy an opportunity to get away to-night with all he has."

Grant's face, already congested with cold, reddened perceptibly, and his lower jaw set upon the other. Without a word, he looked at McClernand, who began to explain. Grant interrupted him.

"Gentlemen," he said, "that road must be recovered before night." Gripping the papers in his hand—I heard them crinkle—he continued: "I will go to Smith now. At the sound of your fire, he will support you with an attack on his side."

Thereupon he turned his horse and rode off at an ordinary trot, while following him with my eyes, wondering at the simplicity of the words in a matter involving so much, I saw Colonel Morgan L. Smith coming up the road beyond him at the head of some troops, and guessed who they were.

General McClernand then spoke. "The road ought to be recovered—Grant is right about that. But, Wallace, you know I am not ready to undertake it."

The significance of the remark was plain. The road in question ran through the position his division had occupied in the morning; and feeling now that General Grant had really been addressing him, General McClernand was asking me to take the proposed task off his hands. I thought rapidly—of my division, by Cruft's return intact, and reinforced—of the Eleventh Indiana and the Eighth Missouri so opportunely arrived—of Colonel Morgan L. Smith—of the order holding me strictly to the defensive now released.

"Did you send to General Charles F. Smith for assistance?" I asked McClernand.

"Yes."

"Well, I see some troops coming, ordered probably to report to you; if they are, and you will direct the officer commanding to report to me, I will try recovery of the road."

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

At McClelland's request one of my aides—Ross, I think—rode at speed to meet Colonel Morgan L. Smith. Returning, he said, "It is Colonel Smith from General Charles F. Smith, ordered to report to General McClelland."

"Go back, then," said McClelland, "and tell the colonel that I request him to report to General Wallace."

Whereupon I said: "It is getting late, and what is done must be before night. If you will excuse me, I will go at it."

"Certainly," McClelland replied, adding, "I have two or three regiments in order under Colonel Ross, of my division, whom you may find useful."

"All right; send them on."

And as General McClelland left me, I sent to Colonel Smith directing him to halt his regiments behind the battery; with my staff, I then set out to see as much as possible of the ground to be recovered, and decide how best to arrange the attack. My horse objected to the dead men still lying in the road; but getting past them, the hill dipped down into a hollow of width and depth. At the left there was a field; all else appeared thinly covered with scattered trees. The pickets in the hollow were maintaining a lively fusillade, so I turned into the field. I could then see the road ran off diagonally to the right. A bluff rose in front of me partially denuded, and on top of it Confederate soldiers were visible walking about and blanketed. Off to the left the bluff flattened as it went. In that direction I also saw a flag not the stars and stripes, and guessed that the fort lay in studied contraction under it. I saw, too, a little branch winding through the hollow, and thought of my poor horse, then two days without water. The men keeping the thither height caught sight of my party, and interrupted me in the study of their position.

Their bullets fell all around us. One cut a lock out of the mane of a horse of one of my orderlies. But I had what we came for, and got away, nobody hurt.

Upon my rejoining them at the battery, the old regiments (Eighth and Eleventh) cheered me; whereat the fort opened, firing harmlessly at the sound. The Eleventh, from their stacked arms, crowded around John—"Old Balley," they called him—and filling a capful of crumbled crackers, some of them fed him what he would eat. They would have given him drink from their canteens had there been a vessel at hand to hold the water.

While that went on, I got my orders off. Cruft was told, by messenger, to take his brigade down into the hollow, and form line at the foot of the hill held by the Confederates, his left resting on the Wynne's Ferry road. When in position he was to notify me.

Smith was informed of what I have called the bluff, and told that it was to be his point of attack—that he was to conduct the main attack, supported by Cruft on his right and by Ross on the left, and that he was to make the ascent in column of regiments.

Thayer I directed to keep his present position, holding his brigade in reserve with the battery.

By-and-by Colonel Ross—he of Illinois—came up, bringing the Seventeenth and Forty-ninth Illinois regiments that had behaved with distinction in Colonel Morrison's misassault of the 14th. To him I explained that his position would be on the left of the main attack as a support.

I also gave notice to Smith and Ross that I would personally put them in position.

When these preliminaries were disposed of, I looked at the sun and judged that there were at least two hours left me for the operation.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

While waiting to hear from Cruft, I chaffed with the old regiments. Of the Eighth Missouri I wanted to know at what hotel they had put up for the night.

"At the Lindell, of course," one of them responded.

"How were the accommodations?"

"Cold, but cheap."

This excited a great laugh.

Halting in front of the Eleventh, I said: "You fellows have been swearing for a long time that I would never get you into a fight. It's here now. What have you to say?"

A spokesman answered: "We're ready. *Let her rip!*"

Very un-Napoleonic, but very American.

Then heavy firing arose out of the hollow, and soon afterwards a man galloped up the hill to tell me that Colonel Cruft was in position, his left on the road.

"It is time to move," I said to Smith.

"Wait until I light a fresh cigar."

That done, and Colonel Ross told to follow, we set off down the road. Hardly had Smith, with whom I was riding, got half-way across the hollow, going straight for the bluff, when a fire ran along the top of it and bullets zipped angrily through the trees, showering us with leaves and twigs. To reply would have required a halt. At the foot of the ascent I left my Missouri friend, saying, "Try the Zouave on them, colonel, and remember to deploy McGinnis when you are nearly up."

Colonel Ross, to whom I rode next, had deployed his command. Going with him until clear of Smith's ground, I asked, "You understand your part, colonel?"

"Yes," he said, "it is to take care of the left of the main attack."

It took me but a moment to get to Cruft, who was exchanging a ragged fire with the enemy above him.

"Colonel Smith is next you on the left," I said to him.

"Keep a little behind his line, and when you have cleared the hill, swing left towards the fort, pivoting on him."

I hurried then to the open field spoken of; and by the time I reached it, selected a stand-point for general oversight, and adjusted my field-glass, the advance had become general where Ross and Cruft were ascending slowly, inch by inch, the musketry had risen in measure, and the trees stood half veiled in a smoke momentarily deepening.

Presently my glass settled on Colonel Morgan L. Smith and the climb in his front, which I judged of three hundred short steps. In the patches of snow on the bluff breast I also noticed some clumps of shrubs and a few trees, and here and there what appeared to be outcropping of rock. The disadvantages were obvious; yet, counting them as odds in the scale of chances, they were not enough to shake my confidence in the outcome, for there were advantages to be taken into the account—among them the Zouave training of both the regiments, meaning that they were nimble on their hands and knees far beyond the ordinary infantrymen, that they could load on their backs and fire with precision on their bellies, and were instinctively observant of order in the midst of disorder. Indeed, *purpose* with them answered all the ends of alignment elbow to elbow.

While making these observations my attention was drawn off by musketry blent with the pounding of artillery in the distance over at the left. It was General Charles F. Smith's supporting attack as promised by General Grant. Then it came to me suddenly that the crisis of the great adventure was on the army, and that as it went the victory would go. A feverish anxiety struck me. My tongue and throat grew dry and

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

parched. I have the feeling now even as I write, such power have incidents at times to stamp themselves on memory.

Returning then to Colonel Smith, I saw skirmishers spring out and cover the front of his column. To my astonishment I also saw the man himself on horseback behind his foremost regiment, bent on riding up the hill—a perilous feat under the most favorable circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

I would like to describe the ascension of the height by the regiments under Smith, but cannot, for, take it all in all, it was the most extraordinary feat of arms I ever beheld. In the way of suggestion merely, the firing from the top was marked by lulls and furious outbursts. In the outbursts the assailants fell to their hands and knees, and took to crawling, while in the lulls—occasioned by smoke settling so thickly in front of the defenders that they were bothered in taking aim—yards of space were gained by rushes. And these were the spectacles impossible of description. To get an idea of them the reader must think of nearly two thousand vigorous men simultaneously squirming or dashing up the breast of a steep hill slippery with frost, in appearance so many black gnomes burrowing in a cloud of flying leaves and dirty snow. As they climbed on the alignment with which they started became loose and looser until half-way up it seemed utterly lost. There was no firing, of course, except by the skirmishers, and no cheering, not a voice save of officers in exhortation. Occasionally we heard Smith or McGinnis, but

<sup>1</sup> I asked Colonel Smith afterwards what he meant by riding. He gave me a characteristic reply. "I thought the sight of me would encourage the boys." In further illustration of the man under fire, a bullet cut his cigar off close to his lips. "Here," he shouted, "one of you fellows bring me a match." The match was brought, and, lighting a fresh cigar, he spurred on and up.

most frequently the enemy flinging taunts on the laborers below. "Hi, hi, there, you damned Yanks! Why don't you come up? What are you waiting for?"

They were nearing the top, probably a third of the distance remaining, when the Eleventh, in loose array as it was, rushed by the left flank out of column. They stumbled, and slipped, and fell down, but presently brought up, and faced front, having uncovered the Eighth. To get into line with the latter cost but a moment. About the same time I saw the skirmishers drop and roll out of sight, leaving the line of fire unobstructed. A furious outbreak from the enemy and both regiments sank down, and on their bellies half buried in snow delivered their first ragged volley. The next I saw of them they were advancing on their hands and knees. That they would win was no longer a question.

I gave a glance in Cruft's direction and another to Ross. Both were well up in their sections of attack. Just then some one near by broke into a laugh, and called out, "Look there!"

"Where?" I asked, not relishing the diversion.

A party of surgeon's assistants, six or eight in number, seeing us in the field, and thinking it a safe place, started to come across. A shower of bullets overtook them, and when my eyes reached them they were snuggling in the snow behind the kits they carried. And when I remembered how thin the kits were, nothing but oil-cloth, and not more resistant of a minié-ball than tissue-paper, I excused the laugh by joining in it.

Another look towards Cruft, another to Ross, then a brief study of Smith's forlorn hope, by that time nearly to its goal, and I took action.

Regaining the road, I hastened into the hollow, and



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

when about half-way across it noticed a slackening of the enemy's fire; then, hardly a minute elapsing, it ceased entirely. The meaning was unmistakable. We had won! Calling Kneffler, I told him to go to General McClelland and tell him we were on the hill, and that he would oblige me if his artillery did not fire in our direction.

In these moves my horse had answered me readily but with his head down—a thing that had not happened before. The other horses of the company were worse off. There was need for me up on the height, but we stopped by the little brook and broke through the ice. While the poor brutes were drinking greedily, Colonel Webster came to me.

"General Grant sends me," he said, "to tell you to retire your command out of range of the fort and throw up light intrenchments. He thinks it best to wait for reinforcements."

I gave a thought to the position just recovered, with loss unknown, and asked the colonel, "Does the general know that we have retaken the road lost in the morning?"

"I think not," he replied.

"Oh, well! Give him my compliments, colonel, and tell him *I have received the order.*"

Webster gave me a sharp look and left me. I had resolved to disobey the direction, and he saw it, and justified me without saying so—as did General Grant subsequently.

XLIX

The height won—The dead on the field—Johnson, the servant—  
Stores stolen—The sleep on the field—Major Ross—The flag of  
truce—The entrance to Fort Donelson—General Buckner and staff  
—Captain Walker—The formal surrender—Union advantages.

THE sun was just going down when, with my staff, I rode on to the height just won. To my eager search for what of war and combat it had to offer there was at first nothing which one may not find in any neglected woods pasture; only the air was heavy with the sulphurous smell of powder burned and burning, and through the thin assemblage of trees there went an advancing line of men stretching right and left out of sight. My first point was to catch that line.

The enemy had not waited the coming up of the Yanks. His main body had retired towards his works, and the three commands, Cruft's, Ross's, and Smith's, with just enough resistance before them to keep their blood up, were pushing forward at a pace calling for energetic action if they were to be brought to a halt. That done, however, the three were closed on the centre; then, skirmishers being thrown to the front, we advanced slowly and cautiously.

It was not long until we came on the aftermath of General McClernand's morning struggle. Dead men, not all of them ours, were lying in their beds of blood-stained snow exactly as they had fallen. And the wounded were there also. These, fast as come upon, were given drink and covered with blankets, but left

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

to be picked up later on; and there was no distinction shown between the blue and the gray. The wonder was to find any of them alive.

While following the line I saw a man sitting against a stump in a position natural as life. Besides the Confederate homespun of which his clothes were made, he sported a coon-skin cap with the tail of the animal for plume. His eyes were wide open and there was a broad grin on his face. I would have sworn the look and grin were at me, and, stopping, I spoke to an orderly.

"Find out what that fellow means by grinning that way. If he answers decently, help him."

The orderly dismounted and shook the man, then said, "Why he's dead, sir."

"That can't be. See where he's hit."

The cap when taken off brought away with it a mass that sickened us. A small bullet—from a revolver, probably—had gone through the inner corner of his eye leaving no visible wound, but the whole back of the head was blown off and the skull entirely emptied.

On a little farther we rode over the body of a Confederate lying on his back spread-eagle fashion. A gun clutched in his hand arrested me.

"Get that gun," I said, and one of my men jumped down for it.

It is in my study now, a handsomely mounted, muzzle-loading, old-style squirrel rifle. Sometimes I take it out to try at a mark, when, as a souvenir, it strikes me with one drawback—touching it is to revive the memory of its owner looking up at the sky from his sheet of crimson snow; and that he brought the piece to the field with him intending to kill Yankees as he was in the habit of killing long-tailed rodents does not always suffice to allay the shiver it excites.

## LEW WALLACE

It is to be remembered that, in common with my whole command, I was profoundly ignorant of the topography of the locality. That we were moving in the direction of the fort I knew rather as a surmise than a fact. The skirmishers kept up their fire; otherwise the silence impressed me as suspicious. Once I heard the report of a great gun in the distance, and shortly a shell of half-bushel proportions went with a locomotive's scream through the tree-tops; whereupon we knew ourselves in the line of fire from the gun-boats in the river. Disagreeable—yes, vastly so—but there was no help for it. Right after—indeed, as if the unearthly scream of the big shell had been an accepted signal—the holders of the fort awoke, and set their guns to work—how many I had no means of judging.

Through the woods then there sped a peculiar short-stop whistling; nor was there need of one of greater experience in battle to tell us that we were objects of search by cannister and possibly grape-shot. Fragments of the limbs above us rattled down, and occasionally—the thing of greatest impression upon me—a sharp resound, like the cracking of green timber in a zero night, rang through the woods; and that we also instinctively knew to be bullets of iron embedding themselves in some near-by tree-trunks.

Now, as I have no wish to take credit not strictly my due, the effect of this visitation startled me—the more so as it came in the nature of a surprise. I asked myself, however, “Where are we going?” And as the answer did not come readily, I made haste to order another halt.

It happened that my position at the moment was behind Cruft's brigade in what I took to be the road to Charlotte, also the object of anxious solicitude. Mak-



ing way through the halted line, the situation revealed itself. There, not farther than three hundred yards, a low embankment stretched off on both sides, and behind it, in the background, rose an elaborate earthen pile which a drooping flag on a tall, white staff told me was Fort Donelson proper. Some field-pieces behind the low intrenchment were doing the firing, supported by men lying in the ditch. The heads of these bobbed up and down; and every time one of them bobbed up it was to let loose a streak of brilliant flame, with a keen report and a rising curl of smoke as close attendants. In front of the outwork far extending were our skirmishers behind stumps and logs, and in every depression affording cover; and they, too, were shooting. The interval of separation between the enemies ranged from eighty yards to a hundred and fifty.

The scene was stirring; but it must not be thought it held me long—far from it. While I looked, a sense of responsibility touched me with a distinct shock. What next?

Two things were possible; to continue on or go back out of range. The first meant an assault, and I doubted my authority to go so far. It seemed a step within the province of the commander. Perhaps he was not ready to order it. To be successful, moreover, there was need of support; otherwise the whole garrison could be concentrated against me. So, resolving the skirmishers as they were into a grand guard, Colonel Morgan L. Smith in charge, I retired the line five or six hundred yards.

There was nothing for us then but another night in bivouac without fires, and nothing to eat but crackers; literally suffering from the pinch of hunger added to misery from the pinch of cold. Yet I did not hear a murmur. This, I think, because there was not a sol-

dier there so ignorant as not to know the necessity of keeping a tight grip upon our position.

With the advent of darkness the gun practice ceased, and later even the pickets quit annoying one another. Then silence, and a February night, with stars of pitiless serenity, and a wind not to be better described than as a marrow-searcher.

About one o'clock, having gone the rounds with Colonel Smith, I thought to make avail of the general calm by a visit to my tent, and a pull at the basket which, when last inspected, seemed good for a breakfast and a lunch at least. Besides that, having advised Cruft, Smith, and Ross (he of Illinois) of my intention to storm the outworks of the enemy at break of day, provided no order to the contrary reached me from General Grant, it would be convenient to stop and see how Thayer was getting along, and move him over during the night ready for the morning's work.

I set Thayer in course of preparation, leaving Ware, of my staff, to guide him to a position on the right of Colonel Cruft; then, with Ross and two orderlies, I pursued on. The tent stood solitary. Even the wagons were gone. I had expected a fire — and Johnson in charge. Drawing the door-flaps aside, I called the man. No answer. We went in. The box that had contained my bedding was empty. Blankets, pillows, mattress, all were gone. Match in hand, we looked with the eagerness of hunger, but uselessly. The basket was keeping the rest of the property company. What had happened? If General McClernand's soldiers still in the vicinity had looted the tent, they could not have made way with my servant. We called him unavailingly. Thereupon we tried him, and found him guilty. I will not repeat the language with which we burdened the pronunciation of our judgment. There being noth-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ing else to do, we remounted and returned to the command. After that I fear we too frequently classified Ben Butler's intelligent contraband with princes, and applied the old moral.

The situation upon our return had in no respect changed. The same general hush prevailed. Behind their stacked muskets the thousands walked about, stamped, danced, threshed their bodies with their numbed hands, and kept the struggle with Jack Frost heroically going. If they were tired, hungry, cold, sleepy, so were we. Everybody watched the sky in the east, and had some Gheber of the kind sung by Tom Moore arisen and preached to us as became a fire-worshipper, there is no telling how many converts he might have made.

By-and-by Colonel Ross, of my staff, pulled my sleeve and whispered: "I have found a log back here big enough to break the wind. By crawling in behind it, and spooning, we may get a nap. I have scraped the snow away and spread a blanket on the ground."

"Where did you get the blanket?"

"Took it from my horse. Serve yours the same way, and we'll have cover."

I accepted the offer and the suggestion, and lying down with Ross behind the log actually slept. Waking, at length, my bedfellow was gone. He had slipped out and left me to what slumber I could snatch. Nor that only—he left me the blankets and his overcoat as well. I rubbed my eyes and, half awake, thought of the gulf of difference between a white gentleman and an ungrateful negro. To be sure, I was not long in overtaking my generous friend and restoring his property.

It was near day when Colonel Thayer's eight regiments began to arrive and take position one by one on Cruft's right in prolongation of the line. As this for-

mative operation was in view of the enemy, I wondered at his silence. It looked as if the fight were out of him.

At length, the formation completed, we stood ready to rush the intrenchments. Only, why didn't the order come? At all events, the Confederate flag was yet flying over the fort faintly visible "in the dawn's early light."

"There—what's that?" said one of my party, in a surprised tone.

"Where?"

"There—coming over the breastwork."

Two men rode over the parapet. One of them carried a white flag on a pole, lance-fashion. Not caring to have my arrangement spied upon, I told Captain Kneffler to go ask what the flag wanted.

Kneffler, making haste, met the men before they reached the pickets. After a talk with them, he hurried back and reported.

"The bearer of the flag," he said, "is Major Rogers, of Mississippi.<sup>1</sup> He brings a request from General Buckner that you refrain from further hostilities, as he and General Grant have been in correspondence about a surrender, and they have reached an understanding. The major has a despatch for General Grant which he wants permission to deliver in person."

This was great news indeed—news to justify a display of excitement. The report, however, not being altogether satisfactory, I went out to sound the messenger further.

The introductions were stiffly ceremonious, in course of which it came out that the officer accompanying the flag-bearer was General——.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is the name of the officer as given in my official report.

<sup>2</sup> Bushrod Johnson, according to present recollection.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Do I understand, gentlemen, that the surrender is perfected?"

"I do not know if a formality will be required," the general replied. "With that exception it is a surrender."

"Are you ready to give possession?"

"Yes. The troops are drawn up in their quarters, arms stacked."

At this I felt a quick thrill, which, if the reader pleases, may be set down to a recognition of an opportunity and an irresistible impulse to get there first.

"Then it is now business?"

The general bowed.

I lost no time. To Ross I said, "Go with the major here to headquarters. Let him deliver his despatch to General Grant. Tell the general, also, that I am in possession of the fort and all belonging to it." Then to Kneffler: "Do you ride to the brigade commanders, and tell them to move the whole line forward, and take possession of persons and property. Tell them to see to it personally that their men are kept in close check—that I want the business done as delicately as possible. Not a word of taunt—no cheering."

The general looked at me gratefully; whereupon I asked him if he knew where General Buckner was quartered, and he replied, "I left him in the old tavern."

"Well, if you say so, I will ride to the tavern with you. General Buckner and I are personal friends. I have the highest respect for him, and it may be I can do him a good turn."

My new acquaintance borrowed the flag from his associate, telling him, "You won't need it." Then to me, "Our people are in a bad humor; but I will be glad to have you go with me."

In passing over the breastwork, I saw men lying in

the ditch dead and half buried in the snow, horrible objects to sight and thought. Here and there inside the intrenchment the garrison stood drawn up in regimental lines behind their muskets in stack. I noticed those we came upon closely. Many were wrapped in blankets of which no two were of the same hue, though butternut and gray were the prevailing colors of their wear. They were mostly a thin-visaged set, angular, tall, light-haired, whip-corded. One had only to look into their faces to know what extremes of hard usage they had been put to, and how much society in general owed to soap and water, combs and towels. I thought they really appeared two or three trifles worse than their enemies outside. They eyed me sullenly, and several times it crossed my mind that I was doing an imprudent thing.

We came to the tavern at length, a one-story affair seen more frequently in that day than in this. I found myself next in a shallow hall, and, stopping there, requested my friend to be good enough to give my name to General Buckner. He passed through a door at the farther end of the hall, and, returning presently, told me to walk in. He did not follow me.

General Buckner sat at the head of a table with officers, eight or ten in number, at the sides. He arose upon my entry, and met me in the centre of the room, grave, dignified, silent; the grip he gave me, however, was an assurance of welcome quite as good as words.

Turning then to the table, he said, waving his hand: "It is unnecessary to introduce you. You know them all."

I glanced at the gentlemen there, and one by one they came forward and gave me their hands. I had met every one of them two years before when General Buckner's guest at the encampment of the Kentucky State

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Guard in Louisville. Their hand-shake was cordial, but they were not in talkative mood. I understood their feeling, and respected it. Two of them had won my regard especially—Major Casseday, Buckner's adjutant-general, and young Tom Clay.<sup>1</sup> The latter was last to come forward. He put his hand in mine, and, turning his face from me, cried like a child—and I could see nothing unmanly in his tears.

The general then inquired if I had been to breakfast, and having answered no, he said, "I'm afraid you are a little late, but we will see." He called a patronymic sounding of the cotton-field, whereat a negro thrust his head through the door.

"Another breakfast here," said the general. "What have you?"

"Nothin' 'cept cawn-bread, sir."

"No bacon?"

"You'se done had it all down to de rine."

"Coffee?"

"Oh, a little water 'll resto' de coffee."

"Bring it then."

I had interrupted the party in the midst of their morning meal, and we ate—and there was no apology for the commissariat. But none the less I decided in my own mind that the surrender had not been any too soon.

The talk became general—about the war, more particularly incidents of the battle. It amused me to observe how honest they were in the belief that we had fifty thousand men with more in hourly arrival. As the idea helped soften the pangs of defeat, I did not disabuse them of it.

Once I said something to General Buckner about the

<sup>1</sup> He was the grandson of Henry Clay, the grand old man of his day and generation.

old flag—I think it was in an expression of wonder that his congress gave it up for a new one.

He brought his hand down on the table. “The old flag! I followed it when most of your thousands out yonder were in swaddling clothes—in Mexico—on the frontier—and I love it yet.”

The speech was not meant for retort.

He asked me, afterwhile, “What will General Grant do with us?”

This question was of graver moment than than ever again, and I answered to the best of my light: “I can’t say. But I know General Grant, and I know President Lincoln better than General Grant, and I am free to say that it is not in the nature of either of them to treat you, or these gentlemen, or the soldiers you have surrendered, other than as prisoners of war.”

“Well,” he said, “I thought as much. The only favor I have to ask is that I may not be separated from my friends here.”

“May I say as much to General Grant when he comes in?”

“Yes—certainly.”

In the midst of this conversation there happened an incident in every sense strange. We heard a knock at the door of entrance, and to the acknowledgment “Come in,” an officer entered clad in blue, with gold lace on his cap and sleeves. Advancing towards the table, he observed me and stopped in evident embarrassment. Then bowing—none of us could tell to whom—he took off his cap, bowed again, and said, “I beg to be excused, gentlemen.” With that he walked out. General Buckner looked at me, and asked, “Do you know him?”

“Never saw the man before,” I replied.

“He’s of your navy—so much is certain,” the general said; adding to one of his men at the table, “You had



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

better follow him, captain, and see that no harm comes to him."

The captain hastened out.

Now the sequel gives the incident its character, making it so extraordinary that I choose to insert it as of the text rather than a note.

About two years after the surrender at Donelson a uniformed gentleman came to see me at my headquarters in Baltimore. He introduced himself with a card.

"I am Lieutenant Dove, of the United States navy," he proceeded to say. "You may remember an officer of the navy entering the dining-room of the old tavern in Dover the morning of the surrender of Fort Donelson."

"Yes, I remember. We were at breakfast."

"I am that officer, and ever since that morning I have been in suspension?"

"What for?" I asked.

"At sight of the flag lowering on the fort, Captain Walker, of the *Carondelet*, ordered me to land and secure the surrender to the navy—that is, to him. I reached headquarters, and was about to make the demand when I saw you, and, inferring your rank from your shoulder-straps, I judged myself too late, and retired, not wishing to have a scene. In that you have my offence."

"I see. I was in your way."

"You were there before me. But you can now do me the greatest possible favor."

"What can I do for you?"

"State the facts—that you saw me enter the room that morning—that you were there before me. Such a statement filed with the department will bring me release from suspension. Restoration to duty must follow."

Of course I gave the poor fellow the statement he asked, and it had the effect anticipated. Probably no better example of the keenness of professional rivalry ever offered itself.

Returning to my narrative—my division advanced promptly as ordered, and took general possession of town, fort, prisoners, and property. An hour and a half elapsed, and I was still with General Buckner, when General Grant was announced as in the public room of the tavern. Joining him there, I presented General Buckner's request not to be separated from his staff-officers. General Grant very promptly replied that what was to be done with the prisoners, and where they were to be taken, were questions to be decided by the president; yet he thought General Buckner's wish reasonable and natural; by which I understood he would use his influence to have it gratified, and I so informed General Buckner.

Somewhere towards noon it came out that a programme of entry by the army into the fallen fort had been arranged, in which, by way of special honor, the right of the procession had been accorded General Charles F. Smith and his division.

I never saw the order, and cannot say what mention of the third division it contained, if any. Place in the procession, however, could not have been given it as at the time of the grand entry it was too busy—that is, such of them as were not in the cordon around the prisoners, and guarding the property taken, were doing their best to restore "the inner man" by feeding it with things warm and solid. As for myself, had the question of precedence in honor been referred to me, it should have been settled exactly as it was settled; for nothing of gallantry in the whole war surpassed General Charles F. Smith's charge upon the enemy's works in support

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

of the recovery of McClelland's lost position on the right.

Thirteen thousand prisoners taken, possession of the Cumberland River acquired, making Nashville untenable by General Albert Sidney Johnston, and the military prestige of the South shattered beyond repair, were the results, material and moral, of the fall of Fort Donelson.

## L

The return to Fort Henry—A new command of twelve regiments—  
 Captain Hillyer—The report—Coldness at Grant's headquarters—  
 The Third Division—The sword from Crawfordsville.

FORT DONELSON fell to us in the morning of February 16, 1862. That same day, in the afternoon, an order came to me as follows: "To secure the glorious victory acquired by our arms, and to perpetuate it, the general commanding deems it highly important that the utmost vigilance should be observed to guard all points captured. It is ordered, therefore, that General L. Wallace return to Fort Henry, Tennessee, with two brigades of his command, and Willard's and Bulliss's batteries. Curtis's Horse is attached to the command of General Wallace."

I was as glad to get back to Fort Henry as I had been at being ordered to Fort Donelson. This, not merely because of general need of rest and recuperation, but also to escape the confusion and disorder that struck the new conquest almost irrepressibly. To the undisciplined the demoralization of a victory is but a little less than that of a defeat.

In forming my column of return, Colonel Morgan L. Smith, with the Eighth Missouri and the Eleventh Indiana, had fallen in. I had doubts of the propriety of the thing, but they were as anxious to stay with me as I was to have them, and, to say truth, it was not in my heart to order them out. Next day, however, while the regiments were making themselves at home in the dis-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

mantled fortress on the Tennessee, there came a peremptory order to send both them back to General Charles F. Smith, *their rightful owner*. The intimation was of a new kind of larceny, and that I had been guilty of it. Return took place promptly, with an apology.

In comfortable quarters on the steamboat once more, I wrote and forwarded a report of the part my division had borne in the capture of Fort Donelson. Then there happened a circumstance trifling in itself, but of great influence on my subsequent life in the army. Indeed, I still think it the origin of a trouble that was to go with me through life.

One morning within the week after the report had been sent to headquarters, Captain W. S. Hillyer, aide to General Grant, appeared on my boat, having ridden over from Donelson. After some general conversation, he drew a document from his pocket, saying:

"Here is your report of the Donelson affair. On reading it, I saw you had omitted mention of a point of importance which I doubt not you will see the propriety of inserting."

As the captain was the identical person who had sent me the note declaring I had saved the day on the right at Donelson, I very naturally saw a friend in him, and took the report, remarking: "Certainly, captain. What is it?"

"You omitted to mention that you had seen Captain Lagow (associate aide) and myself delivering orders during the fight."

It is to be said now, in justice to my insight, sharpened by years of practice in the courts, that I saw the importance of complying with the request, since the two aides had the ear of the commanding general night and day. To be perfectly frank, I not only saw the importance of obliging Captain Hillyer, but became anx-

ious to oblige him. Unhappily, I had not seen him or Captain Lagow at any time during the fight, much less delivering orders.

The dilemma can be instantly seen. Either I must tell an official lie or make two powerful enemies at headquarters.

"Captain," I said, "leave the report with me, and come back an hour hence."

Thereupon I called in the officers of my staff, and asked each one of them if he had seen the captains or either of them at any time during the action. They all answered no.

Then, in my anxiety, I did an unprecedented thing. I called in my orderlies, and put the same question to them. They, too, answered no.

When Captain Hillyer returned my mind was made up.

"Here is the report," I said. "It is not changed. The fact is I did not see you or Lagow during the battle, as you seem to think. Sorry not to be able to oblige you. Please return the paper to the files. Now, won't you stay and take dinner with me?"

He declined and disappeared.

Not long then until, on going to headquarters, I was forced to take notice of a winter that had fallen upon the occupants there—a kind of interior winter peculiar in that it reserved its frost and ice for me. Still, General Grant's demeanor continued friendly, and, relying upon it, I gave myself no concern, except to do promptly and as best I could all required of me in the way of duty. Afterwhile, however, the winter reached him—but of that when its turn comes.

In proof of General Grant's friendliness to me shortly after the capture of Fort Donelson, there are evidences which it would be pleasant to have noted and read.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Thus, in his official report of that success, there is the following mention, which I copy verbatim: "To division commanders, however, Generals McClermand, Smith, and Wallace, I must do the justice to say that each of them were with their commands in the midst of danger, and were always ready to execute all orders, no matter what the exposure to themselves."<sup>1</sup>

A few days after affairs at Donelson had quieted down a reorganization of the army took place. This by a carefully considered order dated February 21st, from which I take the liberty of quoting a paragraph:

"Third Division, Brigadier-General L. Wallace commanding:

"First Brigade: Eighth Missouri, Eleventh, Twenty-fourth, and Fifty-second Indiana Infantry, and Bulliss's battery.

"Second Brigade: First Nebraska and Fifty-eighth, Sixty-eighth, and Seventy-eighth Ohio Infantry, and four companies of Curtis's Horse.

"Third Brigade: Twentieth, Fifty-sixth, and Seventy-sixth Ohio and Twenty-third Indiana Infantry, and the remainder of Curtis's Horse."<sup>2</sup>

From a brigade of three regiments infantry to a division of twelve regiments! Yet, as I am making confession, it might as well be thorough—my greatest personal satisfaction was due to discovery of the fact that in the confusion and feverish excitement of real battle I could think. I do not expect this discovery at first to make the impression on the reader it did on me; but if he will

<sup>1</sup> *Rebellion Records*, series 1, vol. vii., p. 160. The grammatical error in the extract must be that of somebody else than General Grant. Papers of his own writing are remarkably free from such faults.

<sup>2</sup> This paragraph of the order is also given verbatim.—*Rebellion Records*, series 1, vol. vii., pp., 469-650.

reflect a moment, the fulness of my meaning will probably dawn upon him.

The above is only an extract. The order from which it is taken, No. 6 of the series of Fort Donelson General Orders, is worthy remembrance as creative of the Army of the Tennessee, an organization unexcelled, if importance of service to the Cause and the gallantry and devotion of its members are considered. That is to say, General Order No. 6 divided the army assembled at Fort Donelson into divisions as follows:

First Division, Brigadier-General John A. McClernand commanding.

Second Division, Brigadier-General Charles F. Smith commanding.

Third Division, Brigadier-General Lewis Wallace commanding.

Fourth Division, Brigadier-General Stephen A. Hurlbut commanding.

Another division, Brigadier-General William T. Sherman's, came later, and then it assumed designation as the First, exactly why I do not know.

A few days afterwards the newspapers announced that McClernand, Charles F. Smith, and I were to be promoted major-generals. In so far as the news concerned me, I gave it no attention; in fact, I did not believe it. To be sure, Donelson had been an affair of complication and trial, and it had given me a degree of confidence in myself; still, I remembered the shrinking and shivering with which the promotion to the brigadier-ship had been attended. I remembered, also, that "Major-General" was the highest rank in the American army as the law then stood, lifting its attainment to a height beyond my ambition.

I was still at Fort Henry when an expressman en-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

tered my headquarters one day, and on my table laid a box done up in heavy ducking and tagged to me. The man delivered a sealed envelope also addressed to me, and, opening it, I found a key and a letter. The letter was from a committee at home, informing me that at a public meeting of my fellow-citizens in Crawfordsville, it had been resolved to present me a sword. The inscription on the scabbard, they said, would furnish a full explanation. There, on opening the case, in a bed of silk-plush and covered with chamois, lay the sword, handle and scabbard all a-glitter. One had only to look at it to know it was intended for occasions of highest ceremony. I sought the inscription before drawing the blade, and it read, "Presented to Brigadier-General Lew Wallace by his fellow-citizens of Montgomery County in recognition of his gallantry at Fort Donelson." The beautiful gift was, of course, gratefully accepted. It is now in the panelled recess over the mantel in my study, along with other relics of my military service — swords, pistols, stirrups, bridle-bits, spurs, and flags.

## LI

New opportunities for Grant—General Albert S. Johnston—Grant made a major-general but removed by Halleck—The advance—Smith in command—Arrival at Savannah, Tennessee—Smith's accident and death—Movement to Crump's Landing.

THAT General Grant caught instant sight of the golden opportunities now open to him, and that he as instantly set out to make the most of them, cannot be denied. From Donelson he hurried to Nashville, intending at least to help in securing that city, leaving General Smith, with his division, to occupy temporarily the fortified places on the Cumberland; at the same time steamboats began arriving at Fort Henry in numbers to leave no doubt of a campaign in quick design up the Tennessee. All this was educational to me, and I watched it with intensest interest.

By-and-by it appeared that, on the fall of Donelson, General Albert Sidney Johnston, having nothing else to do, made speed to get out of Nashville with all that remained to him. He was next heard of at Murfreesboro. Then Generals Buell and Grant met in the abandoned city; and as the former took possession, the latter dropped back to Fort Henry, bringing Smith with him.

At Fort Henry, General Grant found he had been made major-general, and that his command, under the name of District of West Tennessee, had been extended to take in territory from Cairo to the State of Mississippi, the region between the Mississippi River and the Cum-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

berland included. Then, it having been given out confidentially that his "headquarters were to be in the field," we knew whither we were bound, and made ready for departure.

About March 1st, in the midst of the bustle of preparation, a bruit sped through the camp of such amazing import that everybody stopped everybody else to ask:

"Have you heard the news?"

"What?"

"Grant's removed."

"Oh, that can't be!"

"But *they* say it's so."

"What's he removed for?"

"Nobody knows."

"Who did it?"

"Nobody knows that, either."

And because nobody did know, the circumstance took on an increase of mystery, and drew sympathizers in crowds to the landing in front of the general's steamboat. This continued until it became of notoriety that General Charles F. Smith had been chosen successor in command. The quieting down which then ensued was not from any failure of sympathy for General Grant; it was due rather to a restoration of confidence in the management and outcome of the enterprise about to be undertaken.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We now know that General Grant was suspended from command by General Halleck, and that to get backing for the step he telegraphed General McClellan, under date of March 3, 1862: "I have had no communication with General Grant for more than a week. He left his command without any authority, and went to Nashville. . . . It is hard to censure a successful general immediately after a victory, but I think he richly deserves it. I can get no returns, no reports, no information of any kind from him. Satisfied with his victory, he sits down and enjoys it without regard to the future. I am worn out and tired with his neglect and in-

The day of departure at length came round. I can give but a faint idea of the spectacle of the embarkation. One must think of thirty thousand uniformed men in array on the river-bank, drums going, arms glistening, and nearly seventy steamboats with smoking funnels at anchor ready to haul in and take their assignments aboard. He must think, too, of the excitement that prevailed, of the cheering, and braying of bands, and the waving of flags; for this, it is to be remembered, was a victorious army that knew its strength and rejoiced in it.

The divisions marched aboard according to their numbers; and it happened that General Sherman led the movement. He had come up from Paducah with a division drawn in great part from General Nelson, of Buell's army; yet there was no jealousy of him—it was too early in the war for jealousy. And when the procession was formed and all in motion, the Tennessee River, always beautiful, was never more so.

I can see the boats now crowded below and above with their precious humanity; I can see them now in graceful onward sweep, some in dangerous tilt, churn-

efficiency. C. F. Smith is almost the only officer equal to the emergency." — *Rebellion Records*, series 1, vol. vii., pp. 279, 280.

To which McClellan replied: "Do not hesitate to arrest him (Grant) at once if good of the service requires it, and place C. F. Smith in command. You are at liberty to regard this as a positive order, if it will smooth the way." — *Ibid.*, 680.

Then, under date of March 4th, General Halleck further reported to General McClellan: "A rumor has just reached me that since the taking of Fort Donelson General Grant has resumed his former bad habits. . . . I do not deem it advisable to arrest him at present, but have placed General Smith in command of the expedition up the Tennessee. I think Smith will restore order and discipline." — *Ibid.*, 682.

General Halleck took all these bitter things back (*Ibid.*, 683), and restored General Grant to command—that is, it took him about ten days to hear from the army and the American people.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ing the sparkling flood with their huge wheels, and loading the scurrying winds and pearl-blue sky with clouds of sulphurous smoke, yet gay with flower-like colors of streaming flags. I can hear the hoarse coughing of the pipes, the cheering, the music, and the boisterous echoes hurtled back upon us from rocky bluff and wooded shore. And in thought of it all I would grow young again, but for the other thought always waylaying the first—I cannot hope ever to see the like again, much less to be a part of it.

My quarters were on the *John J. Roe*, a lumbering boat of huge proportions, and crowded; and while the day lingered I kept to the pilot-house anxious lest something of the heroic going should slip me. The unarmored *Tyler* and *Lexington* had preceded us by two or three days, and explored the banks and bends; so there was little danger from the enemy. My feeling all the time was that there should be somebody somewhere on the shores to enjoy the wonderful spectacle we were offering—somebody to look at us if not signal a friendly welcome. But no. The houses and cabins here and there were in their accustomed places, and the landings were as of yore, and the dingy towns reminded us of society and trade and peace; but as a rule desertion was over them all; and if now and then a hat was waved or a handkerchief shaken out in cheer, something in the environment always showed itself to whisper of the war as a recognized condition.

We arrived finally at Savannah, on the right bank of the river, the shire town of Hardin County, Tennessee. There were steamboats in multitude tied to the shores, some empty, others still loaded. On a bluff arose the mansion of a gentleman named Cherry, and over it floated a Union flag. A skiff put out, and, meeting me, directed that all the vessels of my division find berths

on the side opposite the town, and tie up there, keeping the men aboard. The house with the flag on it General Smith occupied as headquarters.

In the evening, just after sundown, General Smith came over in a yawl, and walked into my cabin unannounced and unattended. He interrupted my expressions of surprise.

"I am on business," he said. "Are you alone?"

We soon had the cabin.

"Now, have you a map?"

I brought him one, and, unfolding it, he continued: "Down in Paducah, you may remember, I once told you of Corinth as a place of strategic importance. Well, I think we are going there now just as quick as we can dispose of a couple of preliminaries. There are not more than ten thousand Confederates keeping it. Give me your attention."

"I am following you," I said.

"One of the preliminaries is to cut the railroad connecting Corinth and Columbus on the north; the other is to cut the railroad from Corinth to Decatur and Chattanooga on the east. This last I have given to Sherman; the first is to be yours, and for that you are to go on up to Crump's Landing, four miles above Savannah, from which there is a road, said to be good, leading to Purdy."

Bending over the map, he traced the road with his finger.

"You understand? Very well. Now, how to do the thing. I might have sent you an order, and left you to your own devices, but knowing it a business new to you, I have come over to try and help you with suggestions."

He heard my thanks, and must have seen a voucher for their sincerity in my face, for he continued at length,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and carefully. The substance of the instruction was that I should use my cavalry to do the work of disablement, sending it ahead for the purpose. To support the cavalry, and give it something to rally on in case of trouble, I was to keep at convenient distance with my infantry. At the end he told me of General Cheatham, at Pittsburg Landing, six miles by land above Crump's, with a force reported in excess of my division.

"But here," I remember him saying, "see this creek—Snake Creek. It is out of its banks, and Cheatham on the other side with but one bridge by which he can possibly get at you—and that"—he looked at me with a twinkle in his eye—"is called Wallace's Bridge.<sup>1</sup> You must keep it well watched.

I accompanied him, when he had finished the lesson, down to the guard of my boat. There he gave me his hand with a friendly good-night, and stooped to get into the yawl drawn up to receive him. It was then dark. In a moment he lost balance and fell forward, raking the sharp edge of a seat, and skinning one of his shins from the ankle to the knee—a frightful hurt. One of the boatmen raised him up. I urged him to stay the night with me, my surgeon being at hand. Clinching his teeth against the pain, he half groaned:

"No—too much business."

And as they rowed him away out of the darkness he sent me "Good-night." I was never to see him again. Returning to the Cherry house, he took to his bed and, lingering, died.

I must be permitted a farewell to General Charles F. Smith. He made no pretensions to civil attainments of any kind; it is my belief, however, that a reputation

<sup>1</sup> Whence the name, and how derived, I have never learned. It borrowed nothing from me.

like Thomas's, and an esteem indistinguishable from glory, like Sherman's, had been his could he have lived to the end of the war. And descending to particulars, could he have marched against Corinth immediately after the assemblage of the army at Savannah, the order for which I know he felt sure of receiving, there had been no battle of Shiloh with its lights and shades, nor would Pittsburg Landing have a place in history except as the base of a successful military operation.

I went to him a stranger without recommendation, an unknown volunteer, and he waived such prejudices as he may have had against officers of my class, and admitted me to his confidence. Why, I cannot conjecture, unless for a reason like that of the master-workman who sees a possibility of achievement in a piece of undressed wood or in a primitive block of stone. Then, when I think of his last kindness to me, coming in person to show me how to make the most of an opportunity given, is it strange if I become instantly conscious of a place of tears in my heart? And that whatever else forty years may have taken from me physically, or in the way of preception, I am grateful that they have left me able still to see an ideal friend in my ideal soldier, and venerate the hero even as I loved the man.

The scheme of my commander was clear to me. It was to let drive with all force against Corinth before General Albert Sidney Johnston could collect an army strong enough for resistance;<sup>1</sup> and at hampering General Johnston, and isolating the town, my enterprise and that of General Sherman's were aimed. In other words, I saw he meant me to hurry. So he had scarcely reached the opposite side of the river before the chiefs

<sup>1</sup> If he had not orders to this effect, I am satisfied he expected them.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

of my brigade were in receipt of directions and their boats under way.

It is not my intention to enter into the details of what happened to me and my command in doing this bit of work. Suffice it that I secured possession of Crump's Landing in the night, after a trifling skirmish, and, moving the division out from it, succeeded—thanks to Major Charles S. Hayes and his battalion of the Fifth Ohio Cavalry, not to speak of the instructions received from General Smith—in seriously crippling the Mobile & Ohio Railroad north of Corinth.<sup>1</sup> General Cheatham, instead of interfering with me, retired from Pittsburg Landing after destroying Wallace's Bridge over Snake Creek down by the river. General Sherman proved less fortunate in his undertaking.

At Crump's Landing I received an order directing me to take post there.

<sup>1</sup> *Rebellion Records*, series 1, vol. x., pp. 8, 9, 10, 11.

## LII

The topography of the Snake Creek region—Bell and Carpenter—  
A choice of roads—The bridges—Johnston's advance—The messenger to Grant—Grant in Savannah, Tennessee.

THE ground back of Crump's Landing—or Crump's, as we soon came to speak of it—was high, open, easily drained, and defensible. After establishing the brigades in camps, I had my own tent pitched on a point overlooking the landing, the road to it, and a wide range of the river up and down.<sup>1</sup> I was then in condition to study the situation, and all that it required of me.

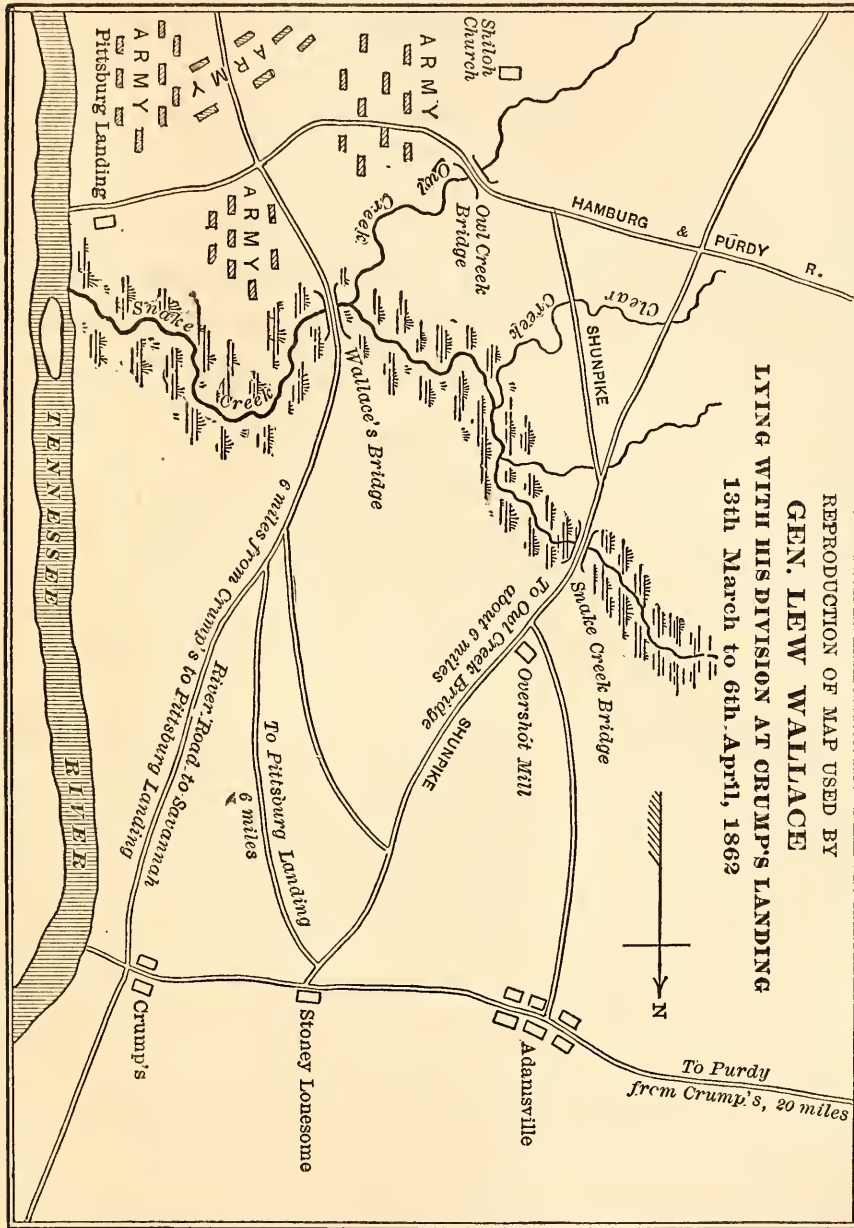
The need most pressing was knowledge of the country. Fortunately, there were Union people willing to give me that, so, with their assistance, I made a diagram, an unartistic breast-pocket affair, very serviceable, however, and so frequently consulted at the time that it is easily reproduced now. I venture to recommend it to such as care to follow me in what is to come.

Now, if one looks at the diagram, it must become obvious that at Crump's my relations with the main army were dependent upon the two bridges over Snake Creek, Wallace's, down near the river, and the other up several miles above Wallace's. These I had inspected very early by Major Hayes, of the cavalry, and he reported both of them dismantled and impassable. The creek itself he described as a sheet of dead backwater, its shores a bog of unknown depth. In short, communica-

<sup>1</sup> A tablet has been erected to show the site of the tents at the Landing.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

tion with the main army then on the south side of Snake Creek was closed, except by boat on the river.



It occurred to me then, suppose Crump's attacked by a superior force, I could not join the main army, the

natural thing to do; neither could it support me by land. Practically, this was isolation; and once more I found myself thrown upon my own resources. All that could be required of one commanding an independent army in face of an enemy was required of me.

A troop of cavalry was sent out on the road towards Purdy, west of Crump's, to ascertain if there was a Confederate force anywhere in that direction. The troops, mere sabre-goers, were waylaid in a narrow pass by bushwhackers armed with shot-guns, and driven back; whereupon I argued that the bridge on the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, which I had been at such pains to break up, was in use again, making it easy for the enemy to direct an attack on Crump's from Purdy.

The bare possibility of such a happening required me to keep posted beyond my own lines. So I selected three scouts, Horace Bell,<sup>1</sup> a citizen of Indiana, and Carpenter<sup>2</sup> and Sanders, enlisted men. Bell and Carpenter I sent to operate in the direction of Corinth, and

<sup>1</sup> Bell was a character. Just before the war his father had been in a jail at Portsmouth, a suburb of Louisville, opposite Jeffersonville, charged with aiding in the escape of a slave. Horace, hardly a man at the time, crossed the Ohio River, and in broad daylight, axe in hand, broke down the door, took the old man out, and in a skiff under pistol-fire brought him safely to the Indiana side. His hatred of slavery and slave-holding had deepened into a passion. It was reported while in my employment that he was a double spy—for me and for the enemy. He certainly had *entrée* at Corinth. I taxed him with the charge one day, but he laughed, and said: "Don't be afraid. God helping me, I can't forget where home is." That he dealt fairly with me I have always believed.

<sup>2</sup> Carpenter's method was also peculiar. Hiding during the day, he fared forth at night, and filled his budget of news from the kitchens of the houses in the vicinity, having first ingratiated himself with the colored servants. The gossip with which he spiced his reports was often amusing even when not important. In telling me of soldiers thus heard of he would say, with earnestness, "Now divide that by two, for you see, with darkeys the gun is always *one* and the man carrying it *two*."



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Sanders out towards Purdy; and thereafter nothing in force, not even a squad of bush-rangers, moved between Corinth and Pittsburg Landing or between Purdy and Crump's that I did not hear of it in good time.

Then I took another step. General Grant had been released from the suspension devised for him by General Halleck, and, coming up to Savannah, relieved General Smith, fixing his headquarters in the Cherry house instead of with the army at Pittsburg Landing—a circumstance which convinced me that the idea of making haste to Corinth had been abandoned. This disquieted me. I regretted the opportunity going, if not gone.

No less discomfoting was the news brought me by Bell of what was doing in Corinth. General Albert Sidney Johnston, he said, was massing a great army there. Generals Hardee, Polk, and Breckinridge, with their commands, were already on the ground, while General Bragg, of Buena Vista renown, had a heavy contingent hurrying up from Florida. Trains on all the roads were in hum, shuttle-like, night and day. In short, the general appearances were that while we were in check waiting—for what, I could not see—the enemy was getting nearer a good ready every day, and might be looked for to beat us up. And then, what if he should conclude to let drive at me? This idea sat up with me, so to speak, spoiling my rest, until at length I resolved to get out of my isolation and its discomfort by remaking a road so that the main army could get to me—or, the emergency governing, I to it.

But which road—there being two, one to Pittsburg Landing, the other to the camp of the First Division (Sherman's) already known as "the right of the army"—should I take in hand? It seemed logical that the going or the coming would be to or from the front

rather than to Pittsburg Landing, the base. And why not say right here; it never entered my head that a force from Corinth meaning battle, and large enough, could close in upon our divisions south of Snake Creek without full knowledge of it at headquarters.

So, having to choose one of the two roads mentioned, I consulted my *vade mecum*—with permission, it shall be hereafter called *map*—and noticed the thoroughfare from Stoney Lonesome southward, and that it forked a little way out, one branch going to Pittsburg Landing by Wallace's Bridge, while the other, known as the Shunpike, led off towards the right of the army. The first branch ran northeastwardly, the second southeastwardly, and whether one wanted to get to Pittsburg Landing or to the right of the army, he would have to ride about six miles—that is, both the thither terminals were approximately equidistant. Such being the case, I decided to restore the Shunpike and its connections, and intrusted the work to Major Hayes, of the Fifth Ohio Cavalry. More specifically, his orders were by corduroying and rebridging to put the road clear to the right of the army in condition to send or bring a battery over it on the run. Then as Major Hayes and his working parties needed caring for, I moved the Second Brigade (Thayer's) out to Stoney Lonesome, and, to keep the road secure after its reconstruction, I sent the Third Brigade (Colonel Wood's) into camp at Adamsville; Stoney Lonesome being two and a half miles from Crump's, and Adamsville five miles.

Under the restoration of the Shunpike, moreover, lay a bit of strategy which I nursed hopefully. That is, if the enemy succeeded in driving my brigades back to Crump's, the exposure of his flank and rear must be fatal to him, provided the body sent to my assistance by the newly bridged route came promptly and in suffi-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

cient strength. This one look at the map will demonstrate. Indeed, I had a feeling that with the road repaired my command would not be molested.

Somewhere in the last week of March, Major Hayes reported the work done; and to be certain of it, I rode with him and one of his companies from Stoney Lonesome to Pittsburg Landing, and back again. The sloughs along the way I found well corduroyed, while the bridges over Snake Creek and the two lesser streams beyond it were really substantial enough to have answered every purpose, commercial as well as military. Hayes's men had even made the bridge over Owl Creek passable. I remember this the more distinctly because of a very decided opinion that Owl Creek, and the bridge over it, and their keeping, all within easy cannon-shot of General Sherman's right brigade, were within his zone of care, not mine. Nor is it yet out of my recollection that while at Pittsburg Landing that day, in company with Colonel A. H. Markland, the very successful postal-agent for the army, I called on General Grant, who happened to be up from Savannah, and reported the opening of the Shunpike and the disposition of my brigades. Returning to Crump's, I slept soundly, for in accounting with my sense of responsibility there was an immense relief in the consciousness that my command was no longer isolated. It gave me confidence also to know everything ready as could be did the enemy make up his mind to engage in a tilt with me at Crump's.

At Crump's also, in the same last week of March, the commission of major-general reached me; but so absorbed was I in the conditions, and in struggling to get ready for the trial so manifestly right at hand, that after qualifying I dropped the precious sheepskin into my mess-chest, thinking, however:

"It's the last round. I can't get higher."

For under the law as it then existed "major-general" was the ultimate of high rank, corps being still unknown in our military organization. As I was in my thirty-fifth year, the youngest of the grade in the service, I now often look back wondering where I got the confidence that possessed me; and sometimes there steals into the reflection a vague suspicion that the thing called courage, if a quality at all, is chiefly compounded of inexperience and ignorance. Nevertheless, the promotion had its initiative in General Grant's recommendation, not in any striving of mine, and in that view it was doubtless easy to convince myself that he must have seen some probabilities of promise in the raw material. At all events, I was very sincerely grateful to him.

An incident occurred about the same time which, though inconsequential, gave me great satisfaction. A courier from Adamsville brought notice of a threatened attack upon the Third Brigade in station there. Smith's brigade set out from Crump's in a time incredibly short, and Thayer's, warned to be ready, fell into column as the First sped by it. The distance was double-quickened with but three short rests, and before midnight the whole division was in place for battle. With the rising of the sun the enemy disappeared, leaving us to return at leisure. The promptness, the zeal, the endurance, and anxiety of the men were inspiring, and thereafter the great coming event seemed slow. I could have trodden on its heels to hurry it.

It turned out, however, that the event needed no urging.

April, milder than in the North, ushered itself in. There were showers, with spells of sunshine, and the river at the foot of my bluff began to show signs of recession. About as the sun set, Thursday, the 4th,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Bell, the scout, came into my tent, evidently the worse of a hard ride, and said, abruptly, "I bring you news, sir."

"Well, what?"

"I picked up some prisoners coming in, and turned them over to the provost."

"Oh! Is that all?"

"No," he answered. "The whole rebel army is on the way up from Corinth."

"How is that?" I asked, rising.

"It's so, sir. They set out this morning early. By this time they are all on the road."

"The whole of them, you say, batteries and all?"

"Batteries and all."

I felt a sensation to the roots of my hair.

"How strong are they?"

"By my calculation, sir, fifty thousand, at least. They are in four corps—Hardee's, Bragg's, Polk's, and Breckinridge's—Hardee has the advance, Breckinridge brings up the rear."

The tent grew confining. I walked out, he after me.

"Where is General Johnston?"

"He is with them, chief man."

"Whom do you think they have in eye?"

"They are pointed towards Pittsburg Landing."

"And not here?"

"No—Pittsburg Landing. I rode part of the way with some friends in Hardee's corps."

"And they may be looked for—when?"

"One of the bridges of the main road is down, and in places the corduroy is afloat. They can't, with all they have to carry, make the distance before to-morrow in the night."

I went into a cross-examination, and, though Bell met me squarely, I somehow could not bring myself to

give him perfect credence. General Johnston, by his account, was ready sooner than I thought. In the midst of my questions, my other scout, Carpenter, rode up to the tent. Dusk was then settling down, spreading its film over the section of the world we were occupying. The man seemed excited.

"Good-evening, Carpenter. What do you bring?" I asked.

He glanced at Bell, and answered, "I suppose you have heard all I have to tell—and more, too."

"Out with it."

"Well, Johnston's cut loose and is making for Pittsburg."

"How do you know?"

"A company of cavalry camped in front of old Mrs. ——— last night, and the officers took supper at the house, and gave it out that the army was to break camp to-day. I laid low to see, and if one man passed my hiding-place since morning thousands were with him—men afoot, men on horses, men on gun-carriages even."

I looked at Bell, and Bell looked back at me, and he said, "Yes, you see, sir."

Then telling them to go to their quarters, I went into my tent, and commenced a note to General Grant setting forth the substance of what the two scouts had brought me. While writing, I heard angry voices outside, and, going to the door, saw Bell and Carpenter face to face, pistols in hand. They were desperate men, and unflinching. I got to them, nevertheless, in time to separate them. What they quarrelled about I never learned.

The note to General Grant I finished by candle-light, and then called for Simpson, the orderly.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I mention Simpson in my report of the battle of Shiloh, and, later, had him commissioned second lieutenant regular army.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Here," I said, giving him the sealed despatch, "I want this put into General Grant's hand. His boat has not gone down to Savannah yet, and he may stay the night at Pittsburg Landing. Anyhow, get your horse, and take it."

"And if the general should be gone when I get there?"

"Then give it to the postmaster at the Landing<sup>1</sup> to deliver to General Grant first thing in the morning. Tell the postmaster the despatch is from me, reporting news of the enemy, and that it must be delivered without fail."

Simpson was a regular of Company I, Fourth United States Dragoons, and in his third enlistment. There was no better horseman nor braver man. He was my favorite orderly.

"What road shall I take?" he asked.

Then it occurred to me.

"Try Wallace's Bridge. The river is going down; maybe the bridge is passable. Try it anyhow. We may need to know."

As he went out, I inquired if he wanted company. He replied, "No, sir."

Near two o'clock in the morning Simpson returned and reported. He had crossed Wallace's Bridge, he said, but with some trouble getting to it. Somebody had relaid the plank. The backwater covering the approaches was still belly-deep to his horse. Infantry could go through it, but not artillery.

"What about the despatch?"

"General Grant had gone down to Savannah when I got to the Landing, and I woke up the postmaster, and gave the despatch to him, with the directions you gave me. I put it into his own hand, sir."

<sup>1</sup> This official was an army postmaster then recently established in the log-house at the Landing.

## LEW WALLACE

This affair has recurred to me often. Sometimes I think the report should have been forwarded by an officer of my staff specially; and I would have taken that course with it—for I thought of doing so at the time—only I feared being considered pretentious. The lesson had from General McClelland in the council of war at Fort Henry was yet in my mind; it was that few things are so offensive as over-officiousness in a subordinate. Besides that, what right had I to suppose General Grant was not on the watch, with more facilities at his command than belonged to me? What an implication, moreover, that he did not know his enemy was coming upon him? Still, were the thing to be done over, I am free to say I should communicate the news to headquarters promptly either in person or by an officer. As it is, whatever my belief may be, founded upon the statement of my orderly, I do not *know*, and therefore cannot say, General Grant ever got the despatch. In view of subsequent events, it is but justice to allow him the benefit of the doubt.

As for myself, I believed Bell, corroborated as he was by Carpenter, and lost no time in communicating the intelligence to my brigade commanders. And more—I directed Major Hayes next day to have the Shunpike patrolled as far as Owl Creek, letting me know instantly as possible of interruption. He was further ordered to have report sent to me at Crump's every hour, day and night. And he did so faithfully, I think, up to Sunday, April 6th.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### LIII

The ride to Stoney Lonesome—Whitelaw Reid—"Agate"—The first order from Grant—The second—The third—The Shunpike—Wallace's Bridge—The countermarch—A night in the rain—*En route* for Pittsburg Landing—Brown and Thayer.

APRIL 6, 1862!

The gray light was still in the eastern sky, trembling between vanishing night and opening day, when a sentinel put his head in my tent door and woke me.

"I hear guns up the river," he said.

I had only to put on my boots and slip into my coat. In a few seconds I was out listening. Sure enough, there were outbreaks of musketry, with cannonading at short intervals. My staff-officers joined me, and there was no disagreement.

"It's a battle."

A steamboat, an adjunct to my headquarters, lay tied up at the landing. Thinking the ominous sounds might be better heard on the water, in company with Whitelaw Reid,<sup>1</sup> who was sharing my tent as guest, I went down to the boat. A number of officers and visiting citizens were on the hurricane-deck exercising their ears. There, too, the opinion was unanimous—

"It's a battle."

It was then six o'clock. I did not hesitate longer. To my aide, Captain Ross, I gave directions to ride to Colonel Thayer, at Stoney Lonesome, and tell him to

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Reid was military correspondent of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, and wrote under the pen-name of "Agate."

form his regiments on their color lines, and hold them for speedy movement; that the First Brigade (Smith's) and the Third (Wood's) would join him at his camp. From Thayer, Ross was to go on to Adamsville, and tell Colonel Wood to bring his brigade back to Stoney Lonesome, as the concentration of the division would be immediate. Colonel Morgan L. Smith was then notified to take his command to the rendezvous. All camp equipage was to be brought to Crump's, where a sufficient guard would be detached to take care of it.

Now, whatever the merits or demerits of the foregoing scheme of action, the reader should not be allowed to suppose it impromptu; on the contrary, it had simmered in my mind the three days and nights since my scouts reported General Johnston's advance. Would it fit the conditions I had imagined? That was all I wanted to know.

My last preparatory order brought John to the Landing. I went ashore to see him. The good horse might have to suffer again; but, fortunately for him as well as myself, the season of snow and boreal winds had passed.

By this time I had taken on enough old-soldier habit not to get excited too much for breakfast, and we took it on the boat, "Agate" with us. While at table we heard the cheering with which the First Brigade set out for Stoney Lonesome.

At seven o'clock we were again on the hurricane-deck looking down the river for the appearance of General Grant's steamer, my interest heightened by expectation, for I felt confident that the general would stop long enough to order me to march to the battle. As the river had fallen sufficiently to leave the lower road practicable, though difficult, would the order be for Pittsburg Landing or the right of the army? With the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

division concentrated at Stoney Lonesome, I was ready for either.

About half after eight o'clock the *Tigress* came up and veered over to the side of my boat. General Grant stood on the second deck by the railing. A number of persons other than his staff-officers, strangers to me, were present with him. Lashings were applied, and, when all was silent, he spoke to me on the hurricane-deck. The conversation is given almost word for word.

He asked, "Have you heard the firing?"

And I answered, "Yes, sir, since daybreak."

"What do you think of it?"

"It's undoubtedly a general engagement."

This was the moment for the order. I leaned forward to catch it, and had instead:

"Well, hold yourself in readiness to march upon orders received."

I was disappointed, and returned: "But, general, I ordered a concentration about six o'clock. The division must be at Stoney Lonesome. I am ready now."

He hesitated, evidently turning an uncertainty over in his mind, and then said: "Very well. Hold the division ready *to march in any direction*."

A stir and some undertalk among those about me followed the last speech, but I stopped it with my hand. The lashings were unloosed. A small bell on the *Tigress* tinkled; she moved off, gathering power, and I lingered in my place until she disappeared around the upper bend at racing speed.

"Gentlemen," I said, "we will get our horses and do our waiting at Stoney Lonesome."

Before leaving the boat I inquired for Mr. Reid. He had gone, nobody knew whither. But having great

faith in the self-caring abilities of newspaper men, I felt more curiosity about him than anxiety.<sup>1</sup>

Setting out for the rendezvous at Stoney Lonesome, my last act was to have a horse tied to an elm-tree.<sup>2</sup> An orderly in charge had orders to allow no one to mount the horse unless he bore an order for me from General Grant; then the orderly was to guide the messenger to Stoney Lonesome. This, as may be seen, was to help hurry the order forward.

The scene at Stoney Lonesome was alive with interest. The Third Brigade had not arrived; yet the First and Second were an army of themselves. The men stood in dense groups about their stacked arms. The musketry ruffled the air distinctly, while the guns were subjects of exclamation—"There! Hear that! Now they're at it! Just listen!"

Officers crowded around me, and to allay their very natural anxiety I detailed the interview with General Grant. We all agreed that the coming of an order depended upon the fortunes of the fight; meantime it was for us to wait patiently as possible.

Ten o'clock, and no order.

I sent Lieutenant Ware to hurry Colonel Wood down from Adamsville.

Ten o'clock and thirty minutes.

Still the pounding of the guns and the ruffling of musketry in the south, but no order.

Eleven o'clock.

The impatience of the mettlesome spirits around me was continually bubbling over. I sent Captain Ross to Crump's. A courier might be there delayed.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Reid, it afterwards appeared, feeling the need of getting to the field early, had gone quietly aboard the *Tigress*.

<sup>2</sup> The elm has been reduced to souvenirs. Even the stump is gone. The average relic-hunter is insatiable, and not always discriminating.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Eleven o'clock and twenty minutes.

Up the road, coming from Crump's, I saw Captain Ross with a stranger on the horse that had been left at the Landing. They were riding fast.

Eleven o'clock and thirty minutes.

The stranger with Ross drew rein and dismounted. He gave the name of Captain Baxter, with the affix *Chief-Quartermaster*, meaning on General Grant's staff.

"I have an order for you," he said to me. "Here it is."

At this, those surrounding closed in, while Captain Baxter put a piece of paper in my hand. I read what was on it twice over. Now memory does not fail me. I see that paper yet, a half-sheet of common foolscap, ruled. I see the tobacco stains on it, and the further defacement of boot-heels. I see a hurried scrawl in pencil, not ink, without address or date—unenvveloped and unsigned. Here it is, almost, if not quite, verbatim:

"You will leave a sufficient force at Crump's Landing to guard the public property there; with the rest of the division march and form junction with the right of the army. Form line of battle at right angle with the river, and be governed by circumstances."

Now nothing could have been less complex; a child could have understood the scrawl; yet, after the second reading, I did what years of practice in the courts made easy—I analyzed it, finding four things wanted of me:

1. A guard to be left at Crump's.
2. A junction with the right of the army.
3. Formation of a line of battle after the junction, its front at right angles with the river.
4. Fight, if the battle was yet on—that being the circumstance which was to govern me.

But there was a preliminary. With the half-sheet of foolscap in my hand, I asked Captain Baxter:

"Whose order is this?"

"General Grant's," he replied.

"Why is it not signed by somebody?"

And he explained:

"General Grant gave me that order on the field verbally. Fearing to make a mistake in the delivery, I put the order in writing, as you see it, coming down the river. For that purpose I picked the paper from the floor in the ladies' cabin; and, not having ink, I used a pencil."

To which I returned: "Very well, captain, I accept the order, and you may so report to General Grant. Now, how is the battle going?"

"We are repulsing the enemy," he said.

Thereupon some of the younger officers launched out disconsolately, and, though holding my tongue, I shared their chagrin.

Colonel Thayer, standing by my side, held out his hand for the paper, and I gave it to him; passing generally around then, it finally reached Adjutant-General Kneffler, who carelessly thrust it under his sword-belt and forgot and lost it.

Captain Baxter left me presently to retake his boat.

There remained then but two points for consideration: Where was the right of the army? and, of the two roads heretofore mentioned, which should I move by?

As to the first point: The right must be where the morning found it, unless it had been moved forward. Captain Baxter settled that when he said the enemy was being repulsed.

With respect to the road to be taken, the lower or river road, that by way of Wallace's Bridge and Pittsburg Landing called for a march of eight and three-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

quarter miles—that is, six to Pittsburg Landing and two and three-quarters to Sherman's camp from the Landing. So, to save the two and three-quarter miles, and because it was nearer the right and in better condition, I decided to go by the Shunpike.

Saturday morning I had ordered three days' cooked rations; now I gave till twelve o'clock for dinner, cautioning commandants that they must be on the road at noon. And at noon exactly the march began, the cavalry leading; the Twenty-fourth Indiana advance-guard, Thayer's brigade, with the Ninth Indiana battery, following; then Smith's First Brigade, with Thurber's Missouri battery sandwiched among the regiments. Such was the order of march, the Third Brigade not having reported.

The going was swift and without incident. Past the old overshot mill, past Snake Creek, past Clear Creek, and no enemy—not a shot. Once I allowed a rest of three minutes, but before the time was up the men arose of themselves and fell in, shouting: "Forward! Forward!" For now we were nearing the fight, and with every step it made itself more distinctly present. God help us, there was never music with motive to action, and such inspiration in it, as that of battle!

The last file of the rear-guard had put Clear Creek behind it, and the guard itself was stepping long and fast. One o'clock and thirty minutes by the watch. We were doing splendidly. Then I was overtaken by a young man with a lieutenant's shoulder-straps. I noticed his horse breathing quick and splattered with mud from nostrils to fetlocks. He was a blondish person in cavalry uniform, minus a cap. A streak of blood frilled his forehead. Riding to my side, he saluted and said, "General Wallace?"

"Yes," I replied, without drawing rein.

"General Grant sends his compliments. He would like you to hurry up."

Without stopping, without a question, I returned, "My compliments to General Grant, and tell him I am making good time, and will be up shortly."

The courier left me, going by the rear, though I did not notice it at the time.

This message was of an import to have drawn attention and led to inquiry but for the fatal answer of Captain Baxter—"We are repulsing the enemy." Indeed, I had been under the influence of that answer since the departure from Stoney Lonesome. If the enemy is being repulsed, I had asked myself, what need is there for me; and Baxter had silenced the question. It must be for a flanking operation or pursuit. The firing had moved obliquely to our left, and I settled discussion of the circumstance, thinking of Baxter, and arguing, "The enemy has been driven from the right to which we are going, but he is still making it warm over on the left nearer the river." This at the time—not yet two o'clock—was satisfactory to the gentlemen who heard it as well as to myself.

A few minutes after two o'clock—in the excitement I did not look at my watch—another interruption came along. Captain Rowley, of General Grant's staff, rode up from the rear. He was greatly excited.

"I've had a devil of a time in finding you," he began. I checked my horse.

"What's the matter?"

"I've been sent to hurry you up."

"That's the second message of the kind. I don't understand it."

"Where are you going, anyhow?"

"To join Sherman."

"Sherman!"



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“Yes.”

He plucked my sleeve. “Come with me aside here.”

At the edge of the road, out of hearing, the captain broke out: “Great God! Don’t you know Sherman has been driven back? Why, the whole army is within half a mile of the river, and it’s a question if we are not all going to be driven into it.”

Now, I would be very disingenuous not to admit myself more than shocked by this intelligence, heightened in effect, as it was, by Captain Rowley’s energetic style of expression. We say in common phrase, “Oh, he’s *rattled!*” And I know the word is slang; nevertheless, I dare to use it because it so nearly describes the condition into which I was flung mentally. Beaten—that army! Incredible! The idea struck me dumb — too dumb for question.

Fortunately for me, the eclipse of my faculties did not last long, and I was able presently to comprehend that, with my division, *I was actually in rear of the whole Confederate army!*

It gives me a world of satisfaction now, late as the hour is, to remember that, in the worst stage of the shock I struggled with after Rowley’s announcement, my only thought was how best to serve the comrades in awful peril down by Pittsburg Landing.

With me, subject to my word whether forward or back, were four thousand men who had come to the honorable estate of soldiers at Donelson. Why not wait for Colonel Wood and his two thousand of the Third Brigade, and then go on? *That* was my impulse. The advantage of an attack in the rear would be mine; and, though more might not have been in my power, I could at least have distracted the enemy and compelled him to notice me. Detachment from his engaged lines — saying he had no sufficient reserve —

would have served Grant and his fighting remnants by giving them a breathing-spell in which to reorganize and take new positions. Indeed, such a course might have been their salvation, and I would have tried it had I been left to myself. *Unfortunately*, in that moment of suspense I received from General Grant his *third order* to me since morning.

Turning to Captain Rowley, I asked him, peremptorily:

"Does General Grant send me orders?"

"Yes," said the captain, "he wants you at Pittsburg Landing—and he wants you there like hell."

That decided me. The words were rough, but the captain's excitement was great, and I passed them the more willingly since they shifted the responsibility of action from me to General Grant.

"Do you know of a cross-road from this one into the river-road?" I asked Rowley.

"I know of none," he said.

"Not forward, but back?" I persisted.

"I know of none," he repeated. "I went first to Crump's Landing; they told me there that you were at Stoney Lonesome, and I overtook you from that place."

Seeing Rowley could be of no service as a guide, I despatched Simpson and Fletcher, orderlies, to return along the line of march and bring me a resident of the country—forcibly, if he refused to come peaceably.

Addressing myself to the captain, I then said: "To obey General Grant, I must first back the column out of this. Tell him I accept his order, and that he may look for me at Pittsburg Landing, which I will reach soon as possible by way of Wallace's Bridge. Tell him I will get there, if I have to fight my way in."

Rowley left me at that, going to the rear.

It will be observed, doubtless, that in all this inter-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

view nothing was said to Captain Rowley explanatory of how I came to be on the road by which he overtook me. Had I thought myself on a wrong road, it strikes me as a fair inference that I would have been swift in calling for Baxter's memorandum.<sup>1</sup>

As soon, then, as the order could be carried to the front and rear of the column, a countermarch by brigades took place,<sup>2</sup> Hayes, with his cavalry, being left to take care of the rear. Great was the wonder on the part of the men, and it was by no means silently indulged; for every one of them had by that time worked himself into fighting tension, and to be pulled away just when on the edge of the battle was past understanding.

Returning, we met the orderlies bringing a guide, from whom I learned of a cross-road from the Shunpike we were traversing into the lower, or river, road to Pittsburg Landing, not on my map. As the guide reported it available though difficult, I turned into it, head of column right. While making the change of direction, the Third Brigade came up and took its place, completing the division. Colonel Whittlesey, claiming seniority of commission, was then given the brigade.

The progress was toilsome and intolerably slow. To help the push forward, I sent my entire staff down the column. While in advance of the advance-guard, wait-

<sup>1</sup> This manœuvre has been severely criticised; and, referably to time, it is indefensible. A *right-about* of the column would have expedited the march. My object, however, was to get certain regiments whose fighting qualities commanded my confidence to the front; for that I chose the countermarch, and next day the forethought was amply justified.

<sup>2</sup> *Propos* of my failure to get to the field Sunday, the first day of the battle, various statements have appeared in the earlier histories of the war. Some say I lost my way; others that I took the wrong road; others that the march was circuitous owing to a guide. Some deal with me in a friendly spirit; others maliciously. I give the facts, and beg to be judged by them.

ing, Colonel McPherson (afterwards major-general) and Major Rawlins, assistant adjutant-general, met me, having, like their two predecessors, been despatched to hurry me forward. This meeting occurred on the right of the cross-road a short distance from its merger in the river-road.

The account of the battle these new couriers brought me was even more sickening than Captain Rowley's. Rawlins, of an earnest, devoted nature, was terribly excited. McPherson was more quiet and thoughtful. Neither of them asked explanation of me; and supposing, as they were of General Grant's staff, that they knew my march to join the right of the army was by order, I volunteered no explanation. In fact, I did not once think of wrong or mistake. Rawlins soon expressed dissatisfaction with the progress making. I assured him the division was doing its best. He next insisted that the batteries should be abandoned—they were hampering the infantry. That advice I also rejected. His next proposal was to send the regiments forward as fast as each one arrived. That I also refused. There should be no piecemeal in the business. To make an impression the division must go as a unit — so I argued. To McPherson he privately suggested arresting me. McPherson did not encourage the idea. Dismounting and taking seat upon a log, I announced that there should be no forward movement until the column was closed up. General Grant, I said, wanted the division, not a part of it; the necessities were plain. The two then left me, returning the way they came, by Wallace's Bridge.

All went well marching on the high ground of the cross-road; but when we descended into the places softened by the receding backwater from Snake Creek, it was out of one hole into another, all bad enough



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

for infantrymen afoot, but very trying to artillery horses.

The great strain came, however, when at last we passed into the lowlands of the creek; there an extended opening through the woods signified a roadway out of sight under a sheet of yellow liquid broken occasionally by tussocks of black mud. At the edge of the bog I took a look, and would have stopped for soundings, only the guns of the fight in progress on the other side resounded high and clear, and there was awful appeal in their near roar. The plunge had to be taken; we must get on. I watched the advance-guard as it came up. I suppose they felt as I did, and in they went. Uniforms and personal comfort were as nothing.

By-and-by the First Brigade essayed the crossing. Colonel Smith led them. I spoke to him. "Soon as you reach firm ground on the other side," I said, "deploy, and, if an enemy interposes, don't stop to fire, but rush him with the bayonet."<sup>1</sup>

In a few minutes, under the trample, the sheet covering the roadway turned into thick mortar of the color of dirty chocolate. Seeing this, I sent for the lieutenants in command of the batteries—Brown, of the Ninth Indiana, and Thurber, of the First Missouri.

"Look at it. Can you get through?" I asked them, thinking of their guns and caissons.

Both gave me the same answer—"We'll try, sir."

I watched them as long as they were in sight. The teams rolled from side to side, staggering and stumbling. Sometimes a horse would go down head under, and, rising, beat the air frantically. The axles of the ponderous carriages left wakes behind them like mud-scows. Then, often as a stall occurred, a regiment, overtaking

<sup>1</sup> Berg's sharp-shooters were the only strangers Smith discovered, and they disappeared before he could communicate with them.

the unfortunates, would stop to help them out. Swinging the dripping prolongs on their shoulders, they would lean forward and, with a "Heave, O!" and an "Altogether, now!" drag horses and guns together out of the depths.

The going was slow. A fire of impatience burned the soul within me, and I kept my eyes on the sun, which seemed to go down with the leap of a diver, and still the old bridge (Wallace's) rocked under the tread of companies in hurried passage.

Now I had no doubt of finding somebody on the farther side of the creek waiting for me. Rowley, Rawlins, and McPherson had been so eager to have the division up that, having reported my coming, I was sure that one or the other of them would meet me, or at least have a guide ready to take me to some chosen position. They knew I knew nothing of the situation at the Landing.

The battle, it should be borne in mind, seemed now to pause, and its fury underwent a noticeable lull. What did it mean? My anxiety reached its limit; the things I wanted to know the most but sharpened it. Where was our line? Where the enemy? There must be some vantage of position; was I left to find it as best I could? Certainly no reader can be so dull as not to see how vital these points were, and his astonishment will be in proportion when I tell him that not a soul was present to receive me, nor did anybody come. Once more I was cast upon my own resources.

To add to the difficulties of my position, night fell, with the heavens above us a floor of utter darkness. Mist from the great swamp enveloped us, and soon it began to rain, and nowhere could a camp-fire be seen. Fortunately the fall of night put an end to the battle, and I knew both hosts, or the survivors of them, were

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

seeking rest, each in the place it occupied when the light went out.

I must not omit that, while the twilight yet lingered and the advance-guard was drawing near the bridge, groups of fugitives from the fight met us, flying they knew not where—unarmed, hatless, wild-eyed, covered with mud, many of them dripping with the chocolate water of the creek, and all shouting:

“We’re cut to pieces! Go back while you can!”

With levelled bayonets they were turned out of the way. Their warning cries were answered with curses. Fear is a special artist, and for his painting he keeps colors of his own.

So in files of four, and feeling for the road, the brigades staggered on. Finally they came to high ground, and when, riding in advance, I thought there was solid earth enough to accommodate the divisions, I ordered halt, and facing to the right, effected an alignment. Pickets were sent out at once.

Where was the enemy? Where our own army?

Then the clouds overhead thickened and burst, and it was rain, rain, by the bucketful, but no lightning.

The river was not far off—not more than half a mile, if the bridge we had just crossed had been correctly placed on the map. Half a mile for a great army to lie down in! Heavens, how narrow the margin! Yet there was neither picket nor sentinel to cry us halt!

My orderlies dispersed themselves to the left and rear. Now and then they brought stragglers to me, and I examined them.

“Where is General Grant?”

They did not know.

“Where are Sherman and McClelland? Where the army?”

They did not know.

"Where is the enemy?"

No two of them pointed in the same direction.

Then I rode out myself, along the road by which we had come. Presently I nearly rode a man down.

"For God's sake, don't run over me!" he cried.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"Union," he replied.

"Your name and regiment?"

"I am Sergeant Kaufman, Company I, Fourth Dragoons."

His company had been of my brigade in Paducah, and I knew him. Having been exchanging shots with the enemy when night fell, he gave me the information of which just then I stood in greatest need—that my division was on the eastern slope of Tilghman's Creek, a wet-weather brook emptying into Snake Creek; that the enemy held the opposite slope; and that the intervening hollow was about four hundred yards in width. The sergeant guided me down into the hollow beyond our pickets.

"There," he whispered—"see the top line of the trees against the sky?"

"Yes."

"Well, *they* had a battery here"—pointing with his hand—"when the sun went down, and we all quit."

Taking the course, I returned and posted the ten guns of Brown and Thurber so that they might open a concentrated fire on the position indicated as soon as there was light enough to see across the hollow.

I dismounted then, and, to escape the beating of the rain, covered my head with my cape and crouched close under the sheltered side of a tree. Of the thousands who had faithfully followed me through the long, hard march, no one had the best bed, yet there were all apparently asleep. Only through the sloughing of the



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

wind and the splash of water one voice from the front kept crying:

“Help! Help!”

And the words were long-drawn, so shrilled by agony and despair I could not shut out a vision of the sufferer, his face upturned and bleaching in the wash of the pitiless storm. To get to him was impossible; so for hours the call continued, keeping me reminded that I was on the field of battle not yet ended.

All in all, I never knew a bivouac so fearfully attended. Still I carry with me a distinct remembrance of a satisfaction that did much to counterbalance the insufficient cover of the friendly tree. I knew where the enemy was, and to what point of the compass my front should be established. I fancied, moreover, that a happy chance had dropped my command into a relative position hardly possible of betterment. So, after sending word to Smith, Thayer, and Whittlesey to rouse early and form facing the west and parallel with the road by which we had come, I amused myself thinking of the surprise I had in store for the enemy on the opposite hill, and went to sleep.

## LIV

The Army of the Tennessee—Map—No general-in-chief—Grant still at Savannah—No knowledge of Johnston's advance—No intrenchments—No line of battle—Grant in limbo—General Sherman's statement—Colonel E. C. Dawes—Grant—Jacob Ammen—McClermand.

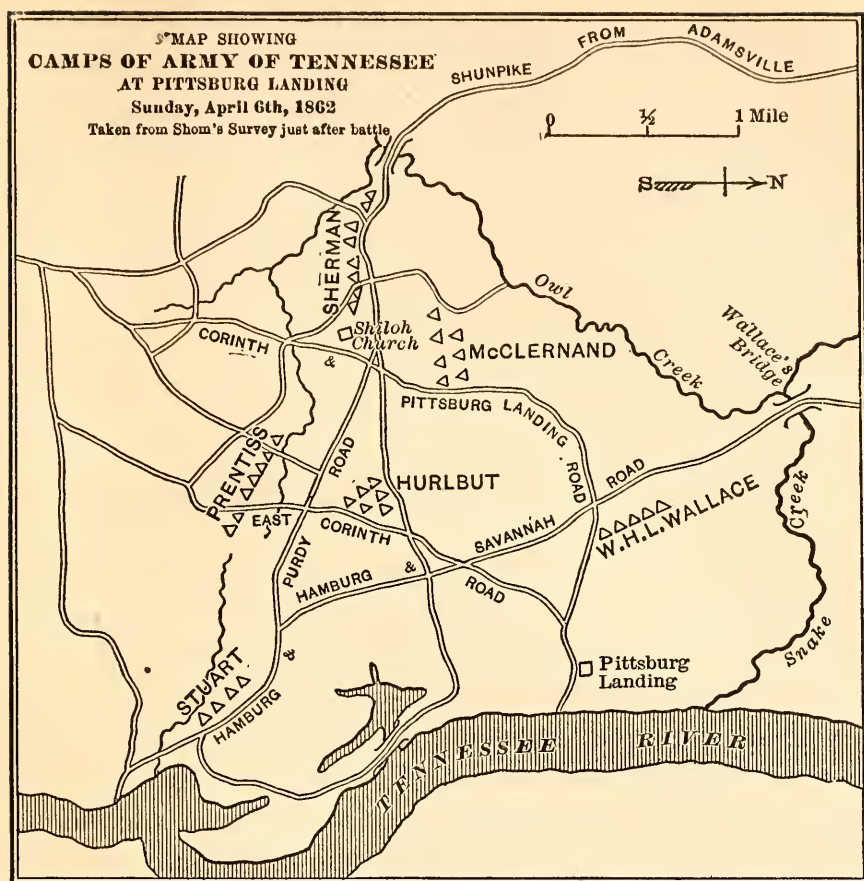
It would be very imperfect work did I now fail to tell about the struggle towards which, under such peculiar circumstances, I spent so many precious hours marching.

We have seen the composition of the Army of the Tennessee, and how five of the divisions—McClermand's, Prentiss's, W. H. L. Wallace's, Hurlbut's, and Sherman's—assembled at Pittsburg Landing, and how mine came to be left at Crump's.

To facilitate understanding of the ground and the relation of the divisions each with the other in their encampments, an informal map following Thom's survey is appended. I think one has only to glance at it to see that, with the exception of Sherman's and Prentiss's, the sites of the several camps must have been chosen without the slightest reference to a possible attack.

From the front to the river, say from Sherman's right on Owl Creek, the space occupied was nearly three miles in depth; while from Owl Creek on the right to Lick Creek on the left a line of battle two miles in length could have been conveniently accommodated. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a location more susceptible of defence, and great credit is due General Charles F. Smith for sagacity in selecting it.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY



That this ground, so well chosen, was not successfully defended Sunday, April 6th, admits, in my judgment, of explanations in no wise impeaching the courage of the rank and file of the army.

In the first place, each of the five divisions had a commander of ability on the ground; that, however, cannot be said of the commanders. *Their* superior was in headquarters at Savannah, ten miles below Pittsburg Landing, on the opposite bank of the Tennessee River.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> General Don Carlos Buell was gravely censured by a commission because at the opening of the battle of Perrysville he was in camp four miles to the rear of the fighting-line without signal-corps connection.

Secondly, though with knowledge of an enterprising enemy at Corinth, none of the most ordinary preparations was made to receive him should he attack.

Thirdly, not one of the five division commanders had knowledge of the approach of the Confederate army and its deployment for battle until its first line was upon them. Nor was General Grant better informed.

Lastly, the army was surprised.

## I

*There was no General-in-Chief with the Army*

I should be very much pained did any one construe the statement about the absence of General Grant at the beginning of the battle into an aspersion of the great soldier. That his headquarters were at Savannah April 6th he never regarded as a subject of accusation. He supposed it well known that he was there at the time by order and in furtherance of a scheme of General Halleck's to have the Army of the Tennessee and the Army of Ohio assembled at Pittsburg Landing; then, the junction effected, he (Halleck) was to hasten down from St. Louis, take the field in person, and at the head of the combined forces move on Corinth; whereupon, applying the turning process to Columbus, Island No. 10, New Madrid, and Memphis, those strongholds were to fall, and the Mississippi, with a little more of like persuasion, to drop back into our possession. The design was truly Napoleonic; but exactly why General Grant should be required to await the advent of General Buell (marching from Nashville across the country) at Savannah, rather than with his army at Pittsburg Landing, is trying to common-sense. The irreverent among us went so far as to suspect General Halleck of



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

jealousy. There are some men not to be contented with a dividend of glory; they must have it all.

At first glance this disposition of General Grant by General Halleck, switching him off and leaving him, as it were, on a side-track, does not seem so harmful; but let us see.

Wires for telegraphing had not been stretched between Savannah and Pittsburg Landing; neither had the Army of the Tennessee been as yet provided with a detachment of the signal corps. In other words, there was no communication to be had except by steamboat. The condition wrought was that of an army in presence of an enemy without a commanding general.

That General Grant, thus in limbo, wrestled with his superior's order by frequently visiting Pittsburg Landing in his boat, always returning to Savannah for the night, proves him sensible of the awkward disposition made of him, and that he felt it was not the close personal touch with his army required of a general engaged in a serious field operation. In the vital matter of observation of the enemy, for instance, he found himself driven by sheer dependency to choose from his division commanders one with whom he could correspond confidentially.

Of the five division commanders one only was of West Point extraction. Very naturally, I think, General Grant chose him for his correspondent;<sup>1</sup> and Major-General McClernand was never heard to complain, much less protest, because Brigadier-General Sherman was so honorably signalized.<sup>2</sup> The distinction carried

<sup>1</sup> *Personal Memoirs.*

<sup>2</sup> General Halleck wrote General McClellan, February 19, 1862: "It was decided in the Mexican War that regulars ranked volunteers without regard to date." How far General Grant approved this atrocious utterance may not be said. He had been in civil life

with it extraordinary responsibilities. He was to be eyes and ears for his chief at Savannah—a sleepless sentinel on a high tower, and the enemy always in sight below him. We will see presently how he discharged his trust. We will also see what befalls an army engaging in battle without a commander, there being anything like equality on the part of the foe. Fighting without unity is only heroism of a mob a little qualified.

## II

*No Preparation to Receive Attack*

Generally the first thing a commanding officer thinks about when in position and conscious of a possibility of assault by his enemy is defences; and if he has a staff, he calls for his chief of engineers, and has him devise something. At Shiloh, Colonel McPherson is said to have made a survey with intrenchments in view, then advised against them, giving for argument that a line of works would have to be in rear of the advanced line of encampments.<sup>1</sup> But that General Grant tells the incident it would be incredible. The approval of McPherson's advice I regard as a fatal misstep. That there were no intrenchments of any kind was the argument that determined General Johnston to sally from his fortifications at Corinth and take the offensive.<sup>2</sup>

General Grant's apology for the failure to intrench is ingenuous. He says he had no idea the enemy would leave strong intrenchments to take the initiative when

long enough, I think, to have learned that nothing could so certainly demoralize an army constituted, officers and men, of volunteers as such an idea put in practice.

<sup>1</sup> *Personal Memoirs*, by General Grant, vol. i., p. 332.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, by William Preston Johnston, p. 567.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

he knew he would be attacked where he was if he remained.<sup>1</sup>

General Sherman, in his *Memoirs*, treats the neglect very differently. "We did not fortify our camps against attack," he says, "because we had no orders to do so, and because such a course would have made our men timid." There is not a veteran living who does not know that if General Sherman had thought of breastworks or rifle-pits in front or in rear of his brigades, he could have had them on his own order. Then as to making the men timid the pretext is shocking to common understanding.<sup>2</sup>

This, though the most serious oversight in preparation, was not the only one by any means. The advance line of battle was incomplete. It had dangerous lapses in its formation. Thus, the left regiment (Fifty-third Ohio) of Hildebrand's brigade, Sherman's division, was separated from the regiment next it on the right by an interval of two hundred yards, while the troops nearest it at the left were one-half mile distant. That is, there was a half-mile wholly unoccupied between the left of Sherman's division and the right of Prentiss's.<sup>3</sup>

And yet, I am sorry to say, there were other inattentions equally conspicuous. A battle being imminent, it is usual to clear the fighting force of impediments—such as subtlers and their tents, the sick, women, teamsters and their wagons, and non-combatants generally. So,

<sup>1</sup> *Personal Memoirs*, by General Grant, vol. i., p. 333.

<sup>2</sup> The "Hornet's Nest" is in point here. It was an abandoned road washed out by rains to a depth of twenty or thirty inches, and screened by a thicket. Our men laid down in the hollow, and for two or three hours held the position against the choicest chivalry of the South led by General Johnston in person.

<sup>3</sup> *My First Day Under Fire*, by Lieutenant-Colonel E. C. Dawes. *Sketches of War History*, vol. iv., published by Ohio Commandery, Loyal Legion.

too, hospitals are erected at convenient sites in the rear, and marked by yellow flags; they are also provided with stretchers and details to serve them. Finally, but by no means least in importance, each division is followed by extra supplies of ammunition in wagons, moving as it moves. It remains to be said that the battle of Shiloh was fought without one of these preparations in advance, except in the case of General McClellan, whose bitter experience at Donelson taught him to keep boxes of cartridges always at call.

## III

*There was a Surprise*

I do not flatter myself that my opinion will settle the vexed question of a surprise of the Army of the Tennessee on Sunday morning; still I do think it in my power to set others, notably the historian, in the way of getting at the truth.

As a result of my studies of the *War Records* and reliable contemporaneous history, I say that in my judgment the Army of the Tennessee, Sunday morning, April 6th, did not know the Confederates were in its front in force intending battle until the firing at the commencement of the struggle gave general notice of the startling fact. I say further, and deliberately, and conscious of the meaning of my words, McClellan and Prentiss were no better off; neither were Hurlbut nor W. H. L. Wallace, the other division commanders; and most astonishing, General Grant and his *fidus Achates*, General Sherman, were in the same state of ignorance. Now, can I make these affirmations good, the surprise follows as a matter of course. The reader has a right, I think, to the evidence governing me.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### *The Army*

In the nature of things the masses of the soldiery could not have known more of the enemy about to engage them than their general officers; so I will commence with the officers.

### *Sherman*

In course of a reconnoissance from Pittsburg Landing, made by General Sherman early as March 16th, he learned from the country people along the road "that trains were bringing large masses of men from every direction to Corinth."<sup>1</sup> This was enough, certainly, to have put and kept him on inquiry, and suggested resort to some of the usual methods of getting intelligence of the enemy, touching which Napoleon has said, "It is a fact that when we are not in a desert, but in a peopled country, if the general is not well instructed it is because he is ignorant of his trade."<sup>2</sup>

From March 16th to April 2d, General Sherman, indifferent or in lordly contempt, seems to have allowed General Johnston to travel his road to readiness in peace. There is literally nothing of record to show so much as an effort by him to penetrate his opponent's headquarters or the camps surrounding them in swelling clusters. Yet was he the chosen of General Grant!

From March 16th to April 2d—seventeen days. In that short time, as if to prove the energetic genius of General Albert Sidney Johnston, the Confederates grew into an army—then into a great army—and then, on April 3d, in four corps under the preferred officers of the old regular army establishment, the same genius set out from Corinth for Pittsburg Landing—set out to

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs* (Sherman's).

<sup>2</sup> Napier's *Peninsular War*, vol. i., p. 242.

beat his enemies in detail, Grant first, then Buell—to surprise Grant's legions asleep in their tents.

And now surely the curiosity of the reader must be piqued to see how the Southern general succeeded. Whatever befalls, it cannot be said that the enterprise was unheroic.

On April 4th, at noon, a picket of seven men and a lieutenant in General Sherman's immediate front mysteriously disappeared. The cavalry (Major Ricker's) and detachments from the brigades of Colonels Buckland and Hildebrand—all of General Sherman's division—took the road to find, if possible, what had become of the picket. Hearing musketry and three cannon-shots, the general himself, his staff attending, rode out to the picket-line a mile and a half in advance of Shiloh church. Buckland and Ricker, returning, told him they had encountered infantry, artillery, and cavalry. Buckland, in a written account, says: "As I rode up to Sherman at the head of my column, with about fifteen prisoners close behind me, the general asked me what I had been doing. His manner indicated that he was not pleased."<sup>1</sup> Ricker, writing of the same occurrence, is more explicit. "When we got back to the picket-lines," he says, "we found General Sherman there with infantry and artillery in line of battle, caused by the heavy firing of the enemy on us. General Sherman asked me what was up. I told him I had met and fought the advance-guard of Beauregard's army—that he was advancing on us. General Sherman said it could not be possible. Beauregard was not such a fool as to leave his base of operations and attack us in ours—mere reconnoissance in force."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *Memoirs* (Sherman's) *in the Light of the Record*, Boynton, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> The original of this paper is in the hands of Major Ricker's son

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

General Sherman forwarded a statement of Colonel Buckland's to General Grant at Savannah. We will presently see the impression made upon that officer.

Colonel Appler, of the Fifty-third Ohio, above mentioned, was in an extremely nervous state, Saturday the 5th. A picket-line of men in butternut clothes were reported to him as having been seen, the colonel ordered the regiment formed, and sent his quartermaster to General Sherman with the story. The quartermaster came back, and said: "Colonel Appler, General Sherman says, 'Take your damned regiment to Ohio. There is no enemy nearer than Corinth.'" At 7 P.M., Colonel Hildebrand sent word to Appler that General Sherman had been to his tent and told him (Hildebrand) that the force in front of our army had been definitely ascertained to be two regiments of cavalry, two regiments of infantry, and one battery of artillery.<sup>1</sup>

In August following, General Sherman, testifying as a witness in the trial of Colonel Worthington, said of the Buckland-Ricker discovery: "We knew then that we had the elements of an army in our front, but we did not know its strength or destination."

General Sherman dated his official report April 10th, and he says in it: "On Saturday the enemy's cavalry was again very bold; *yet I did not believe he designed anything but a strong demonstration.*"<sup>2</sup>

We have the doughty gentleman's opinion down as late as seven o'clock Saturday evening; and, as he bluffly refused to credit General Johnston's army in his front at

who, in a letter to me, says the general's manner and speech were so offensive that his father turned away and abruptly left him.

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel E. C. Dawes, *Sketches of War History* (published by Ohio Commandery Loyal Legion), vol. iv.

<sup>2</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. x., p. 248.

that late hour, it becomes a point of redoubled interest to learn, if possible, exactly when his eyes were opened to the actual situation. Fortunately, we are able to slake our curiosity. In the same official report he says:

“About 8 A.M. I saw the glistening bayonets of heavy masses of infantry to our left front in the woods beyond the small stream alluded to, and became ‘satisfied *for the first time* that the enemy designed a determined attack on our whole camp.”<sup>1</sup>

Eight o’clock Sunday morning! It was, indeed, the eleventh hour; but in that hour the man awoke from his deadly scepticism and bravely asserted the skill and other high military qualities that afterwards made him the Second Soldier of the Republic.

### *Grant*

General Grant’s apology for not intrenching might be quoted again, but I will pass it, there being so much else to prove him as densely ignorant of the enemy, their strength and whereabouts, as his confidential correspondent—indeed, that in this important matter he was dominated by that officer.

Buckland’s account of the affair of the outposts on the 4th instant, received through General Sherman, General Grant telegraphed to headquarters in St. Louis, dated April 5th, saying, with other things of less pertinency:

“They [the enemy] had with them three pieces of artillery, and cavalry and infantry. How much cannot of course be estimated. *I have scarcely an idea of an attack*

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. x., p. 248.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(general one) being made upon us, but will be prepared should such a thing take place.”<sup>1</sup>

We have seen the extent of the preparations.

One looking for evidence on the point under consideration will be rewarded for his trouble by digging a little in Badeau's *Life of Grant*. Thus, a telegram from General Grant to General Halleck is there quoted, dated April 5th

*“The main force of the enemy is at Corinth, with troops at different points east. . . . The number of the enemy at Corinth, and in supporting distance from it, cannot be far from eighty thousand men.”*

This, it is to be observed, General Grant believed only the day before the battle. It sounds and seems incredible!

I might rest with that telegram; but there is more to the purpose.

Colonel Jacob Ammen commanded the Tenth Brigade, Nelson's division, Army of the Ohio. He reached Savannah with his command before noon of April 5th. From the diary of his keeping I make an extract:

*“About 3 P.M. General Grant and General Nelson came to my tent. General Grant declined to dismount, as he had an engagement. In answer to my remark that our troops were not fatigued, and could go on to Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, if necessary, General Grant said: ‘You cannot march through the swamps; make the troops comfortable; I will send boats for you Monday or Tuesday, or some time early in the week. There will be no fight at Pittsburg Landing; we will have to go to Corinth, where the rebels are fortified. If they come to attack us,*

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. x., p. 89.

## LEW WALLACE

we can whip them, as I have more than twice as many troops as I had at Fort Donelson.' ”<sup>1</sup>

So did this speech impress Colonel Ammen that he says, in the same paragraph of his diary:

“As the division is to remain here some days, I issued orders to the Tenth Brigade for review and inspection to take place Sunday, April 6th, 9 A.M.”<sup>2</sup>

On the 6th, leaving his teams and artillery at Savannah, Nelson marched his division through the swamps to Pittsburg Landing. Why not on Saturday?

Finally, General Grant's stop by my steamboat at Crump's will be remembered. Nor will his order to me be forgotten: “You will hold your division ready to march in any direction” — such was its purport. And my telling him that I was then ready brought no change in the direction. More's the pity! For I had in round numbers seventy-five hundred effectives at that moment in my division, and nearly all of them had been seasoned in the dry-kiln of battle at Donelson. Now, if General Grant knew then, or had reason to believe that General Albert Sidney Johnston had leaped lion-like upon the shoulders of his army and was bearing it to the ground, would he not have ordered me to the field at once? At eleven-thirty o'clock, when his order to march did at last reach me, it was too late for victory; everything, himself included, was in slow retrocession to the river, driven by the enemy he supposed at Corinth.

### *McClelland*

The camp of the First Division (McClelland's) lay about three-quarters of a mile rather to the left rear

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. x., p. 330.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

of General Sherman's—so very near, in fact, that one would think the "gentleman from Illinois" should have been told about the affair of the outposts on the 4th—this, if only to have given him an opportunity to draw his own conclusions. But no. There is a paragraph in his official report, filed shortly after the battle, which convicts him of the ignorance of his associate commanders. I give it entire.

"Early in the morning of Sunday, the 6th of April, hearing sharp firing at short intervals on my left and front, in the direction of Sherman's and Prentiss's divisions, I sent a messenger to General Sherman's headquarters *to inquire into the cause of it*. Soon after my messenger returned with General Sherman's request that I send a battalion of my cavalry to join one of his, for the purpose of discovering the strength and design of the enemy."

The inference here partakes of certainty. Would General McClernand have addressed such an inquiry to General Sherman had he been at any time taken into confidence and told of the enemy present in force?

McClernand's inquiry, however, must have been forwarded before eight o'clock, for with Sherman the strength and design of the enemy had yet to be discovered.

*Hurlbut and W. H. L. Wallace*

Hurlbut's camp was near a mile and a quarter in rear of Prentiss's, and W. H. L. Wallace's fully two miles and a half behind Sherman's. Neither Hurlbut nor Wallace had occasion to be on the lookout for attack, and, not being called on for picket duty, neither of them concerned himself with what might take place in the region extending forward of Prentiss and Sherman. So, on Sunday morning, most of General Hurlbut's

## LEW WALLACE

troops were at breakfast when the firing began,<sup>1</sup> and it was then Prentiss communicated what he calls "the fact of the attack in force."<sup>2</sup> This notice, sent at day-break, must have been received in the time a horseman could gallop to the headquarters of the officers named.

Now Hurlbut and W. H. L. Wallace were soldiers of equipoise and sterling courage. If they had previously heard of the activity of the enemy out in front, the news was doubtless tempered by Sherman's idea of a reconnoissance; still, the announcement of an attack in force must have astonished them. We may be sure they got their divisions in readiness. We may be sure, also, they felt the absence of General Grant. Each chief of a division left to his own judgment, what if there should come a clash of judgment? What if Prentiss and Sherman should happen to make the same request of Hurlbut or Wallace, or both of them at the same time? What a multiplication of the perils of mistake!

### *Prentiss*

We come now to Prentiss—General Ben, as his soldiers loved to speak of him. What knowledge had he of the danger piling up in his front? At what hour Sunday morning were his eyes opened upon the reality?

He says, in his official report,<sup>3</sup> that on Saturday evening he supported his outposts with ten companies of infantry under Colonel Moore, of the Twenty-first Missouri, who returned to him about seven o'clock with advices of "activity in the front." This news Prentiss disposes of as "an evident reconnoissance of cavalry." In plain speech, like Grant, Sherman, McClelland,

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Veatch, in *War Records*, series 1, vol. x., p. 220.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 278.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 277.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Hurlbut, and W. H. L. Wallace, General Prentiss late Saturday evening had no idea of a general attack impending. Nevertheless, he materially strengthened the guard stationed out on the Corinth road.

Now we cannot get the time of Prentiss's awakening as exactly as we have Sherman's, but we come, as it were, in a hair's-breadth of it. He says, in the same report, that his advanced pickets were driven in at daybreak; whereupon Moore promptly engaged the enemy. Then, he adds, a little after daybreak he ordered his entire command into line. Then, a little later, Moore having come back severely wounded, and with all his men, the enemy close at their heels, Prentiss, unable longer to refuse the evidence of his own eyes, notified Hurlbut and W. H. L. Wallace of what he calls *the attack in force*. Then, shortly after six o'clock, he says, the entire line was under fire.

I think, now, time were poorly spent arguing that, when the commanders are taken unawares their army is not.

That General Grant and his lieutenant, Sherman, were caught so flagrantly may astonish their admirers; it should not, however, for in the Shiloh period they were both at school, learning to apply military principles acquired by them at the academy long before; one of them, it may be further said, graduated after Vicksburg, the other on the road to Atlanta.

## LV

General Albert Sidney Johnston—Lee—Departments of Virginia and Tennessee—General Johnston's plan of attack—Confederate testimony as to the surprise of Grant—Colonel Jordan—William P. Johnston—Whitelaw Reid—The events of Sunday morning.

HAVING exposed, as it were out of their own mouths, the deplorable ignorance of the division commanders of the Army of the Tennessee, and of the commanding general who should have been with his men, but, through no fault fairly attributable to himself, was not—in ignorance, I mean, of the enemy and his movements from Corinth to Shiloh—let us turn to that enemy and hear from him. If surprise there was, perhaps he will tell us whether it was complete, and, what must be of lasting interest, how it was accomplished.

I make no apology for calling the Confederates into court. They are of the same stock with us, neither better nor worse. That they were brave should make us the more ready to believe them, speaking or writing; and who shall say they were not brave?

When the Confederacy was launched, almost the first thing authorized by law was the appointment of five military officers with the rank of *general*. Strange to say, measuring the fame of the men now, Albert Sidney Johnston became the senior of Robert E. Lee—on the roster he was No. 1 and Lee No. 3. Such was the estimate of the men at the time of their appointment. If, subsequently, Johnston fell short of Lee, it

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

was due to a reason which I have never seen taken into the account. The defence of the State of Virginia was geographically the limit of Lee's duty, and he was favored with means. On the other side, consider that which fell to Johnston. His department was "the northern frontier west of the Alleghanies, and a portion of that mountain-barrier." <sup>1</sup> Consider its vastness, the lack of men and material, the difficulty of defence because of the many openings for invasion, some of them navigable waterways leading far up and down into the heart of the country. Viewed thus, Lee's task was difficult, while Johnston's was impossible; and I think the latter saw and to himself acknowledged the impossibility straightway after the fall of Donelson. Or, if he had a reliance at all, it was in the incapacity of such as might be his opponents-in-chief — General Halleck, for instance, who had no genius except as a marplot, in which he was incomparable.

While at Bowling Green, and on down until his light went out at Shiloh, all the time of his exercise of command, General Johnston somehow contrived to keep informed of his enemy. So, after his retreat from Bowling Green to Nashville, and from Nashville, and while at Corinth, where he arrived on March 24th, he kept track of General Buell, march by march, by what agency we know not.

Genius has an insight of its own, the badge by which it is made known. General Johnston could not fail to see through the design of the joinder of the armies of Grant and Buell. There is no doubt in my mind that he hurried to Corinth thinking General Halleck was making him a present of an opportunity as good as

<sup>1</sup> *Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, p. 292.

if to order. Then his counter-plan—Grant first, Buell next—a matter of detail. In ten days he had forty thousand men to operate with.<sup>1</sup> Think of the care and consuming energy that work of assemblage and organization required of him!

At length General Johnston heard of General Buell's approach to Savannah. The hour to strike was come. Then, knowing the situation at Pittsburg Landing perfectly — that the army there had no general-in-chief, that the camps were untrenched, that guard duty was without system and grossly neglected, that nothing was known of his preparation or of his coming—he issued *Special Order No. 8*—a document wonderfully well drawn by General Beauregard—and gave his corps commanders the night in which to study and familiarize themselves with the order of march and battle. Such was *Special Order No. 8*.

To attack in the morning of the 5th (Saturday) — that being the original purpose—one day was allowed to make the march and a night to get into position, Mitchie's house serving for direction and point of assemblage. But the roads were found almost impassable. Some of the commands failed the rendezvous.

Thus Hardee, of the Third Corps, was at Mitchie's in the morning of the 5th instead of the evening of the 4th.

Bragg, of the Second Corps, bivouacked the night of the 4th in rear of Hardee.

Polk, with two of his divisions of the First Corps, following Hardee at an interval of half an hour, halted near Mitchie's in the morning of the 5th.

<sup>1</sup> The figures are given from the despatch General Johnston wired President Davis under date of April 3d (*Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, p. 554).



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Breckinridge, with the reserve corps, effected the junction at five o'clock Saturday afternoon.

And so, by reason of the failures, it befell that Sunday, April 6th, became the great day instead of Saturday, the 5th.

Not until five o'clock Saturday afternoon did the entire Confederate army stand deployed in three lines—Hardee's first, Bragg's eight hundred yards in rear of Hardee, Polk's in column of brigades not far from Mitchie's, Breckinridge on Polk's right. Meantime, that no unfriendly eye might see what was going on in the neighborhood of Mitchie's, troops of cavalry well supported held the roads and paths in the extended fronts of Prentiss and Sherman. At sundown of the 5th they were a compact curtain hanging against the whole western sky opposite Shiloh Church; nor might anybody push through it except at peril.

I think it pardonable now to try and imagine General Johnston's feelings when the last report, "All ready," was brought him. Men are alike, only some have more iron in their natures than others. How often, what time it shone, he had consulted the sun!—for such is the out-door man's mode of telling how much or little time he may have. He could not help seeing there was then—five o'clock afternoon—an insufficiency of daylight for the work before him. Night battles are seldom satisfactory. The foe whom he was going against, moreover, were not of the kind to be finished at a volley—they were Americans. He made haste and called his corp commanders into council.

Colonel Jordan, General Beauregard's chief of staff, has left us an account of this meeting, "held," he says, "in the open air, at an intersection of roads, and within less than two miles of Shiloh Church," which, with the soldiers engaged on the Union side, always means Gen-

eral Sherman's headquarters. There were two speakers, so to say, Beauregard and Johnston.

Beauregard advised that the expedition be abandoned and the whole force returned to Corinth. That certainly was extraordinary, but not so much so as the reasons advanced for the opinion. To them I now ask particular attention.

"It was scarcely possible," General Beauregard is reported to have said, "that they [the Confederates] would be able to take the Federals unaware, after such delay and the noisy demonstrations which had been made meanwhile. He urged the enemy would be now found intrenched and ready for the attack; that success depended upon the power to assail them unexpectedly, for they were superior in numbers and in large part had been under fire."

Colonel Jordan concludes his report of General Beauregard's remarks by a significant remark of his own: "And this unquestionably was the view of almost all present."

So, in issuing from their own elaborate intrenchments at Corinth, the Confederate commanders made no doubt of taking the Army of the Tennessee unawares. At the last moment, however, General Beauregard, because he was a trained soldier himself, could not believe the trained soldiers on the other side kept no sufficient lookout or had not intrenchments of some kind.

The large part of the council was with Beauregard. This, it seems to me, but increases the interest in Johnston's reply. We can imagine the group turned to him. Unfortunately, the reporter gives us a poor, meagre, colorless version of what he said; which was "that he recognized the weight of the objections to an attack under the circumstances involved by the unfortunate

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

loss of time on the road. But, nevertheless, he hoped the enemy was not looking for offensive operations, and that he would yet be able to surprise them; and that, having put his army in motion for battle, he would venture the hazard."

And now, by Confederate authority, was the Army of the Tennessee surprised?

In the first place, I have conversed with many Confederates, officers and men, participants in the battle, and cannot recall one of them who did not, and with great and most pleasurable emphasis, claim a surprise.<sup>1</sup>

This, however, is good only as far as it goes. Something published is necessary, and if it should be of record, admitting investigation, so much the better. So we will resort to the old-fashioned exhibit process.

I will begin with General Basil Duke, well and most favorably known in the military circles of both the great sections whose differences made Shiloh a possibility. General Duke is still living, a very brilliant gentleman of Louisville, Kentucky, where he is regarded as the soul of genuine honor. He says:

"If General Grant was ignorant of Johnston's forward and aggressive movement until the blow fell, it argues that his subordinates, nearer the front, were also ignorant

<sup>1</sup> Not long since, advised that this writing was close at hand, and wanting particularly from gentlemen of the Confederate side some authority upon Shiloh the authenticity of which they most freely indorse, I invited a number of them, all of high rank and well known and respected, to dine with me at the Louisville hotel. The affair passed most agreeably, and I came away next day with *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, by William Preston Johnston (D. Appleton & Company, New York), which they said was the completest and the fairest rendering of Southern accounts of the battle. The indorsement was a compliment to the book, and I have accordingly followed it in the foregoing sketch.

of it, for any information procured by them would have instantly been forwarded to him. If General Grant knew Johnston was advancing and meant to give battle, how came he to be at Savannah on Saturday night, and not on the front, where, before and after this battle, he was accustomed to be, and where General Sherman, who, in this respect, practised what he preached, says that a commander-in-chief should ever be when battle is imminent? Above all, it is inconceivable and inexplicable, if the Federal commander realized the danger and actually expected attack, why a strong, continuous line of pickets was not thrown out, some hundreds of yards at least, beyond the ordinary camp guards, and extended along the entire front of the army, not merely in front of Prentiss's division, a precaution that officer seems to have taken without suggestion from or conference with any other; and it is difficult to understand why a part of each division on the front was not made to bivouac on their arms during the nights of the 4th and 5th, and held ready to support the pickets. Two corps of Johnston's army reached Mickey's [Michie's] on the 4th; the entire army was assembled there on the evening of the 5th, with strong picket lines well advanced. For two days, then, before the battle, the forest immediately in front of the Federal position, and less than four miles distant from Sherman's encampment, was thronged with Confederate battalions.

"The Confederate order of attack was arranged on the afternoon of the 5th, and, speaking from a recollection of what I witnessed myself, I would say that the Confederate outpost vedettes and the most advanced Federal sentinels were not more than a mile apart. Everything that transpired along the front and in the camp which we were able to observe was matter of constant and curious remark during those two days. If any recognition of our presence was obtained, it could be discovered by no sign, noted by no movement of preparation in that seemingly careless host. A general feeling of amazement pervaded



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the Confederate ranks at the apathy or ignorance of their adversary; and much of the impetuous confidence which characterized them on the morning of the battle was due to the indications which convinced them that they had surprised their foe."

"General Sherman is credited with having said recently that the stories so frequent at the time of the battle, of men having been shot or bayoneted in their tents on the morning of the 6th, were utterly without foundation. He is mistaken. Very many such instances occurred. It was quite a common thing to see dead men, half clad, lying in tents perforated with bullets, and, in some cases, stretched at the entrance or entangled in the tent-cords as if killed just as they were rushing out. If the Federal army at Shiloh was not so completely surprised as so large a body of men can ever be, then its commanders have a more serious charge to meet. If they were not taken unawares, how can they possibly explain the disadvantage at which they suffered themselves to be taken? What possible excuse can they offer for their careless array and evident want of preparation for immediate battle?"

"No courage, however, can overcome the ill effects of surprise or lack of tactical preparation. It was impossible that the hastily arrayed and ragged Federal line, although the ground on which it was posted was well adapted for defence, could long withstand an assault so skilfully ordered and energetically directed." <sup>1</sup>

The author of *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston* has, in the text of his work, the following:

"Whether Grant and Sherman used all requisite vigilance or not, they believed that the Confederate army was at Corinth, twenty miles away, and only a brigade at Mickey's [Michie's] when that army was unfolding for

<sup>1</sup> *History Fifty-third Ohio Regiment*, p. 56.

## LEW WALLACE

an assault upon them. Whether they were 'surprised' or not, the attack upon them was *unexpected*, and their own words show that a thunderbolt from a clear sky could not have astonished them more than the boom of artillery on Sunday morning." <sup>1</sup>

Replying to Badeau's denial of a surprise in his *Life of Grant*, the same author says:

"The readiness for attack consisted in what? Some colonels strengthened their pickets, one general sent a regiment on reconnoissance, and another had his horse saddled before breakfast." <sup>2</sup>

The author is supported by Confederate military authority of the highest rank — General Bragg, for instance:

"Contrary to the view of such as urged an abandonment of the attack, the enemy was found utterly unprepared, many being surprised and captured in their tents, and others, though on the outside, in costumes better fitted to the bedchamber than to the battle-field." <sup>3</sup>

Here also is General Preston:

"General Johnston then went to the camp assailed, which was carried between seven and eight o'clock. The enemy were evidently surprised. The breakfasts were on the mess-tables; the baggage unpacked; the knapsacks, arms, stores, colors, and ammunition abandoned. I took one stand of colors from the colonel's tent, which was sent by me next morning, through Colonel Gilmer, to General Beauregard." <sup>4</sup>

Colonel Jordan, already mentioned as of General Beauregard's staff, has left a statement:

<sup>1</sup> *Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, p. 576.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 577.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 590.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 590.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“Officers and men were killed or wounded in their beds, and large numbers had not time to clutch up arms or accoutrements.”<sup>1</sup>

Now, inasmuch as I know the unreasoning obstinacy of prejudice, I think it best to conclude this chapter with a little seasoning of the Confederate testimony. So I select a few paragraphs from a report furnished his paper, the *Cincinnati Gazette*, by the late Republican candidate for the vice-presidency, Whitelaw Reid, formerly a reporter and correspondent, one of the ablest, most fearless, and reliable of his day. It may be recalled that on Sunday morning Mr. Reid stepped from my boat at Crump’s onto General Grant’s, and accompanied him and his staff to Pittsburg Landing. As he remained on the field through the two days of battle, I think he may be regarded an eye-witness of the tale he tells, which is, in part, as follows:

“Almost at dawn Prentiss’s pickets were driven in; a very little later, Hildebrand’s [in Sherman’s division] were; and the enemy were in the camps almost as soon as were the pickets themselves.

“Here began scenes which, let us hope, will have no parallel in our remaining annals of the war. Some, particularly among our officers, were not yet out of bed; others were dressing, others washing, others cooking, a few eating their breakfasts. Many guns were unloaded, accoutrements lying pell-mell, ammunition was ill supplied—in short, the camps were virtually surprised—disgracefully, it might be added—unless some one can hereafter give some yet undiscovered reason to the contrary, and were taken at almost every possible disadvantage. . . .

“Into the just-aroused camps thronged the rebel regiments, firing sharp volleys as they came, and springing

<sup>1</sup> *Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, p. 590.

## LEW WALLACE

towards our laggards with the bayonet. Some were shot down as they were running, without weapons, hatless, coatless, towards the river. The searching bullets found other poor unfortunates in their tents, and there, all unheeding now, they still slumbered, while the unseen foe rushed on."

END OF VOL. I.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Frank L. Milbertson

### LVI

The fighting done by the Army of the Tennessee—Rain and darkness—The surprise by Johnston—Desertions—Diagrams 1 and 2—Colonel Stuart—Prentiss—Terrible loss of life—Gaps in the line of battle—Sherman—Killing of officers—The arrival of Grant—The *Tigress*—Sherman—The death of Johnston.

I WISH now to notice with some particularity the fighting done by the Army of the Tennessee at Shiloh.

It has long been a conclusion of mine, arrived at from the study of the official reports of the corps and division commanders, Confederate and Union, who had parts in the battle, that the Army of the Tennessee should have been driven into the bogs of Snake Creek or forced to surrender hours before the arrival on the field of General Buell's Fourth Division of the Army of the Ohio.

Why was it not so driven?

I offer two reasons: the unexpected obstinacy of the resistance encountered by the Confederates; next the loss by the Confederates early in the action of their corps organization, or, in another form, the premature merger of their three lines of battle into one. To these, probably, the death of General Johnston should be added.

#### *The Resistance Encountered*

The commencement of the attack had been set for three o'clock in the morning; a downpour of rain, however, deepened the natural darkness of that hour, com-

pelling a postponement to five o'clock. Then the Confederates moved forward as silently as such vast bodies of men, horses, and carriages could, impeded as they were by fences, uncleared woods, gullies filled with running water, and ponds and swamps choked with brush and vines.

They advanced, never doubting to burst in upon their enemies snuggling in warm tents or nervously "falling in" while rubbing the sleep out of their astonished eyes.

After a little the first moving line of two and a half miles' front turned into a wave that rolled over the amazed pickets struck by it, fairly lifting them off their feet. The extraordinary supports come upon, like Moore's regiment of Missourians sent out by Prentiss to do some "feeling round," and the grand-guards caring for Sherman's legions asleep, were given a volley or two and sent home breathless, fast, but not faster than the disturbing apparitions in butternut suits and slouched, drab hats pursued them.

In every well-governed military camp the day is begun with reveille; "Fall in" follows, and roll-call. Now I have sought diligently to learn if these disciplinary observances were had this first day in any one of the Union camps at the right and left of the old Shiloh Church. There was, instead, the long-roll on snare-drums; and I think myself warranted in saying that no soldier, not even he of multiplied chevrons indicative of so many terms of service, ever heard the long-roll beaten unexpectedly when in presence of an enemy who did not feel his blood break into fast-running mercurial drops.

By this rataplan resounding through the arches of the oak groves sheltering their tents, Sherman's regiments and Prentiss's were roused out; and men constitutionally brave snatched their arms, asking, wildly:

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"What's up? What's the matter now?"

And hardly were they in line before their pickets incoming answered them:

"Get ready—quick—the Johnnies are here thicker than Spanish needles in a fence corner."<sup>1</sup>

There was, indeed, no time to speculate or doubt, for, in many places, right on the heels of the flying pickets came the enemy. Yet, when the latter were come up, it was to see a blue line stretched laterally out of sight standing apparently ready to receive them. Then, unquestionably, as a ball bounds back from a wall to him who throws it, there was a reaction of the surprise, the astonishment of the one side being but a little greater than the other. Withal, however, the advantage was with the assailants—they had got over the chill of the first plunge and were in full charge.

Suddenly, in places enough to be serious, as we shall see, there were vacancies in the blue line, and the woods and hollows behind it were streaked with men running away. These never looked behind. Not a few, I have been told, were drowned in mad makeshifts improvised to carry them over the river.

But, withal, there was a line there, distinct, ugly in the eyes of the foemen, yet beautiful with the beauty of waving banners. And had it been in continuous formation there is no telling what the result might have been.

By which I mean there was a space between Sherman's left and Prentiss's right in extent quite a quarter of a mile, and another of full one mile between Prentiss and Colonel Stuart's brigade at Prentiss's left rear. And forasmuch as I hold the first day of the fight lost on account of those lapses and the prompt advantage

<sup>1</sup> This was given me as actually said by an Ohio soldier.

## LEW WALLACE

taken of them by the Confederates, I stop to give a diagram that the untechnical reader may understand me. Here it is, the dotted lines representing the intervals:

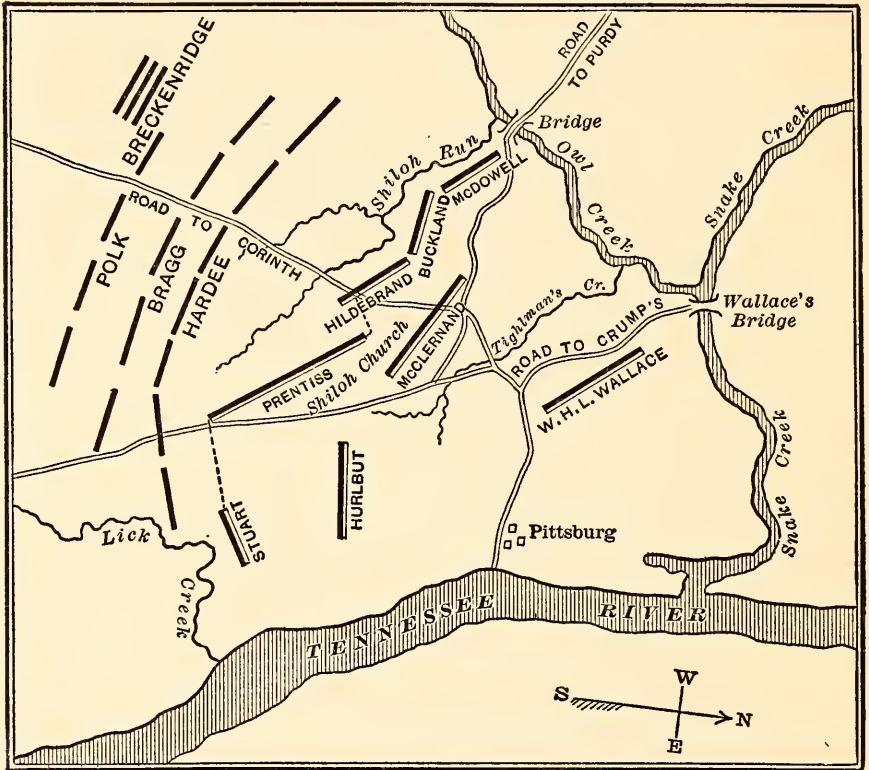


DIAGRAM NO. 1

What would be thought of the farmer who, wishing to keep cattle out of a field, should leave wide-open gaps in his fence? Because the gaps extended so many rods to the rear, how much more, when found, would the hungry herd be troubled by them?

If the official reports of the division commanders make anything clear, it is that the Confederates discovered these intervals almost the first thing in the morning after the lines came in contact, and used them to get in behind the positions they were assailing; after



which it was for the Army of the Tennessee the same dismal story all day long. Unity of action became impossible to them; and as often as they fell back and took new positions offering yet other fronts, they, too, were lost, always by the same incessant flanking, flanking, now on the right, now on the left, with attack sometimes on the right, left, and rear at once. In short, human valor in resistance was never of such small avail, never so completely discounted.

Let us see now how the reports of the Union commanders summarized bear out this theory, beginning with Colonel Stuart.

Colonel Stuart's position, it will be remembered, was on Lick Creek at General Prentiss's left rear. It was his to guard a certain ford of that creek; and there, in a camp fronting southward, his brigade constituted the extreme left of the army.

About seven o'clock General Prentiss had notified Colonel Stuart of the appearance of the enemy in force. Not long after that the latter's pickets warned him of Confederates on the Bark road. The colonel was brave.<sup>1</sup> He called his regiments to arms, and waited developments—or possibly an order, which, alas, there was none to give. We may imagine him on his horse in a state of nervous suspense when, looking westwardly, he beheld what in like circumstances would have astonished the oldest soldier in the world. He saw, using his own words, "the Pelican flag advancing in the rear of General Prentiss's headquarters."

Now the matter of astonishment with Colonel Stuart was not the flag singularly embellished though it was, but the place in which he discovered it.

The colonel doubtless took several quick breaths, but

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Stuart was wounded in the fight.

he needed no Prince Eugene, or Winfield Scott, or any graduate of the academy on the Hudson to tell him the meaning of the apparition. He saw instantly that it had come in through the mile-wide interval between his own right and Prentiss's left, and straightway he did exactly the right thing—he sent a messenger at speed to tell General Hurlbut, his nearest support, that—quoting from his report—"General Prentiss's left was turned, and to ask him to advance his forces." He might have complemented the message with the still broader statement that he himself was flanked and the left of the whole army in the same bad box. So early—only a little after seven o'clock in the morning—had General Johnston succeeded in the accomplishment of the first step in his plan of battle!

General W. H. L. Wallace responded to Stuart by sending him MacArthur's brigade and a battery, and fighting began at once, first with a force in his front and with artillery across the creek. Having occasion to speak to the officer in charge of the battery sent him, he rode in search of that person, but he was gone, guns and support.<sup>1</sup> He looked in the direction of Prentiss, and says, "For above a quarter of a mile to my right no soldier could be seen unless fugitives making their way to the rear." Then he adds, awakening as it were, "I saw that the position of my right brigade was inevitably flanked by an overwhelming and unopposed force."

The colonel galloped back in haste, as may be imagined, and, lo! the regiment on the right of his line, Rodney Mason's, had disappeared without notice. Riding on, he found that what but a moment before had

<sup>1</sup> Stuart seems not to have known that it was MacArthur in command of this support, and, as the latter left no report, we are without an explanation of the disappearance attributed to him.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

been a wholesome brigade of three full regiments had dwindled to eight hundred men. And while he was chewing the bitter cud vigorously the column that had brought the Pelican flag in through the undefended interval was forming line of battle to open on him, coolly, leisurely, as if entering upon a breakfast job. Then, too, he beheld cavalry passing to his rear. Finally, to make the situation ugly nigh to desperation, when he turned his eyes to the left it was to see still another unfriendly body fast flanking him in that quarter. In short, an officer of greater experience than Colonel Dan. Stuart, weighing the appearances, would have caught himself suddenly a-hungry for a less arduous position somewhere in the rear; but the colonel, be it said to his credit, braced up, made good disposition of his men, and held his ground.

Two hours thus, and no help. The brave men standing by their colors rifled the cartridge-boxes of the dead and wounded. At last they were ordered back. Taking up a new position, they fought on.

Let us look now to General Prentiss.

The diagram No. 1 will show the position of his division (the Sixth) with certainty sufficient to enable us to see all that happened to it. By six o'clock it was under fire from flank to flank, assailed on its left by Chalmers, a very intrepid Confederate officer. General Johnston, present there, moved Chalmers farther to his right. The Pelican flag Stuart saw, so much to his astonishment, belonged to Chalmers; so did the column which made its appearance in rear of Prentiss's headquarters. To fill Chalmers's place, Johnston took Jackson's brigade out of his second line (Bragg's corps) and brought it forward into the first. Prentiss's situation may now be seen and appreciated. Chalmers was marching unopposed through the interval at his rear. The brigades of

Jackson, Shaver, and Gladden, the two latter of Withers's division, bore down on his front; while, in prolongation of the Confederate attack to the left, Hindman, with unbridled fury, flung his regiments partly against Prentiss's right, partly against Sherman's left. Still Prentiss held fast, his ranks depleted by death, though mostly by desertions, until Hindman broke through at the point of connection with Sherman; then, assailed in rear, on the left, in front, and on the right, all at the same time, he ordered the retreat of so much of his wasted command as remained true to their flags. The color-line of his camp was the designated place of assemblage. He also applied to Hurlbut and W. H. L. Wallace for support.

'All this—and not yet eight o'clock!

General Johnston, satisfied with the conditions of the fight over on the Lick Creek side of the field—Stuart isolated, Prentiss turned and going—pulled the near bridle-rein of "Fire-eater," his horse, and rode leisurely in the direction of Owl Creek. In this progress the first division he came to was that of Brigadier-General Thomas C. Hindman, whom, in the general advance of the first line of attack (Hardee's), chance had thrown in front of Hildebrand, of Sherman's command.

When Johnston reached him, Hindman had broken Hildebrand's brigade into fine pieces, and, discovering the quarter-mile gap between Prentiss and Sherman, was pouring his masses through it like so many successive floods through a *crevasse*. Nevertheless, having suffered fearfully from Prentiss on one side and Buckland on the other, he asked reinforcement. Whereupon Johnson sent a request to Bragg to advance his whole second line.

This, I stop to say, marks a chapter in the battle.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Bragg had anticipated Johnston. His entire corps—he calls it force—was already actively engaged; so that from seven-thirty o'clock a second line cannot longer be supposed. Nor that only—portions of Polk's corps of the third line were by that time also engaged; and we are permitted to get glimpses of four commanders—Johnston, Hardee, Bragg, and Beauregard—each submissive to no one, each acting upon his own judgment, each at times without notice even countermanding orders given by one of the others—neither of them with a defined command. A little later we will discover Polk in the same category. In other words, the supreme direction had passed from General Johnston; there is now no one to execute his plan of battle but himself; and the Confederates, being without a general-in-chief, are in that respect no better off than the Army of the Tennessee. In other words, again, there is now hope for the latter. It has only to continue the struggle until night brings the Army of the Ohio up—then, to-morrow, victory!

But can the Army of the Tennessee hold till night?

The interest grows acute now to learn what is doing with Sherman. The left shivered and retiring, what of the centre and right?

In the camp arrangement of Sherman's brigades, Hildebrand's (the Third) had been set down on the left, the road from Pittsburg Landing to Corinth serving as a mark of separation between it and Buckland's (the Fourth). The demarcation was also emphasized by Shiloh Church, a little retired from which Sherman's headquarters tents shone fresh and white through the green of the oaks around them. This, in a sense, identified Sherman with Hildebrand.

The alarm given and the regiments falling into the deafening din of long-rolls, he, still in a doubting mood,

climbed into his saddle, called his staff to him, and mixed with the Hildebranders, though somewhat to their front. Presently he beheld a body of men hurrying diagonally across the descending field before him going to the left—an astonishing spectacle in the clear sunlight brilliant with starry flashes from bayonet-points innumerable. In that same moment out of a thicket not far away a scattered fire opened upon him, and of the group in attendance one, a mounted orderly, dropped from his saddle dead. It may be believed that Sherman sent at least one quick look in the direction of the fatal salute; and it was to see Hildebrand's pickets coming in flying for life, and behind them, tearing through the cockle-burs of Shiloh, ran a disordered swarm of strange soldiers mouthing a strange yell for battle-cry. The sight, as it well might, satisfied him for the first time of the enemy present in force, and, like a sensible man in possession of his wits, he made haste to get away from the sharp-shooters.

In a moment the brigade was under fire. In another moment the regiment on its left (Appler's Fifty-third Ohio) broke, and as an organization was not seen again that day. The other regiment stood and fired two or three volleys; then they, too, fell into confusion.

Sherman hurried a request to Hurlbut, W. H. L. Wallace, and McClernand, all three, for help. The mix-up about him grew worse and worse. To increase his concern, he heard noises of battle off in front of Buckland and McDowell. Yet he lingered awhile with Hildebrand trying to restore order. A shot came along and hit him in the hand. The enemy meantime surged in almost unresisted; seeing, then, the hopelessness of the situation there, he rode away to give countenance to the rest of his command.

And Hindman, now in the interval widened by the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

flight of Hildebrand's three regiments, was making free play against Prentiss's right flank and Buckland's left, for it must be remembered the attack in this quarter was upon the two divisions at once.

They who had watches, and were cool enough to look at them, were surprised to find the time a little short of eight o'clock.

That Sherman did not order Buckland and McDowell to the rear must be taken as proof that he relied upon McClernand to come up and take care of Hindman. He knew the natural strength of the position occupied by their brigades—in front clear to Owl Creek, a swamp carrying off the waters of Shiloh Run; then an open, meadow-like space which before Buckland was a grassy ascent quickening to a towering wood on top. In its reach towards McDowell the rise became an acclivity, its rough face covered with brush and vines. Difficult ravines intersected the declivity. To strengthen his position, McDowell had creased the brow of the height with a ditch.

It may be doubted if in his plan of battle, making the left of the Army of the Tennessee the object of chief attack, General Johnston intended more than a demonstration against Buckland and McDowell. Against them, however, Beauregard, who now assumed care on the Confederate left, launched Hindman's Second Brigade belonging to Brigadier-General Cleburne, a wonderfully brave and pertinacious Irishman. In passing the bog of Shiloh Run three of Cleburne's regiments, separating, went to the left and three to the right. Cleburne's horse mired and threw him. Covered with mud, he joined the detachment moving to the right, which brought him opposite Buckland, who made awful work with him. The rush was magnificent. Charge and repulse, and charge and charge again—all useless.

The green of the meadow vacated by Cleburne, when at length he withdrew to reform his brigade, was hidden under a very pavement of dead men. Sometimes they lay on top of one another.<sup>1</sup>

The assault on McDowell, next Buckland on the right, was equally a failure, though not so bloody. And along the hill-top Sherman rode back and forth, speaking little, but grim and never more resourceful. If now McClernand keeps the faith, all may yet go well—such, no doubt, was the inspiration governing him in holding fast to the height on which fortune had posted him.

Eight o'clock now—that is, from five to eight the tremendous murder-mill had been grinding thunderously on; and we may make a point of the time, and be better possibly of a glance at the situation.

General Johnston has finished his progress to the left, and from Cleburne, about to assail Sherman, is returning well satisfied to the right again.

Bragg's corps and a considerable part of Polk's are merged into the one firing-line along with Hardee's, and neither Hardee nor Bragg can any longer distinguish his own; so there is nothing of separate duty left them.

Occasionally Beauregard rides forward, and, mindless of the zone of command he happens to be in, does by direct order what he thinks best. And it is observable that the pushing he does is towards the Landing perpendicularly; whereas Johnston's, over on the right, is

<sup>1</sup> Tuesday morning a lieutenant in charge of a burial-party came and requested me to go with him and see a dead Confederate whom he thought a brigadier-general. I accompanied him. The body was that of a major; but—and this is the point—in getting to where it lay it was necessary to cross the meadow-plat spoken of in the text as in front of Buckland's position, and it is no exaggeration to say that for two or three hundred yards I could have stepped upon corpses without once setting foot on the blackened grass beneath them. There were spots awful, Heaven knows, elsewhere on the field, but I saw none so supremely horrible as that one.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

still turned towards the impenetrable swamp of Snake Creek northwardly—a criss-crossing of purpose significant of a battle without a plan, if not a baton lost.

Withal, however, the Confederates are in possession of the entire line of camps first come upon. Thereupon their advance undergoes a noticeable slackening; for each tent has to be searched, and, with other loot, every subtler's caravansary is rich in drinkables that inspire to drunkenness. In face of such temptations the Southern conquerors are weak as common people, and as a consequence the hundreds dropped behind are fast multiplying. Not long now until the mob of deserters under the bluff at the Landing will have their counterpart in the opposite region of Shiloh Church.

A low-lying, sulphurous cloud, whiter of the mellow Tennessee spring-time morning sun fairly in course through the cloudless sky, defines the debatable sections of the field, and under it the Confederates, tired though exultant, move on, here in line, there in columns. Suddenly what may be called a new battle rises before them; for the meaning of which we must now inquire of Generals Hurlbut, W. H. L. Wallace, and McClernand.

We have seen how, instantly he had it forced upon him that the enemy was in his front in force, Sherman sent back for help. Hurlbut replied with a brigade (Veatch's), an act the very generosity of which betrays how little he who did it knew what was just ahead in wait for him.

McClernand's ignorance of Johnston's presence, or his incredulity, as the reader pleases, is proven, if further proof were needed, by his conduct now. The enemy, he says, came pressing against his left with a mass five regiments deep. To meet the danger he ordered his Third Brigade into line nearly at right angle with Sherman's line, but before the formation could be

effected he admits the Confederates were within close musket range, and that the brigade formed under a deadly fire. Then, instead of making use of his whole division, he permitted the same Third Brigade to charge singly and unsupported, and it barely escaped capture. Reading this, one naturally suspects a diversion attempted while the other parts of the command were getting under arms and in line.

At last the division was ready. Then it does not appear to have been advanced a step. As a result the gap between McClermand and Sherman remained unclosed, leaving the latter a choice of alternatives—to abandon his position or be taken if he persisted in holding it. Nor that merely—McClermand was flanked upon his own right. The resistance, it is to be said, was heroic, nevertheless. Hindman led the attack, and his rage seemed insatiate; but in the slaughter he himself went down wounded and was borne away. Schwartz, Burrows, McAllister, each fought his battery with praiseworthy skill and courage. Haynie, Sanford, Ransom, Nevins, Bartleson succumbed to wounds. Within twenty minutes the Eighteenth Illinois had three successive commanders disabled, one killed outright. Finally, McClermand, outflanked and overborne, yielded to the inevitable, and to save surrender ordered the division to retire.

Passing from McClermand at bay in his new position, let us give attention to Hurlbut and W. H. L. Wallace; after which it will be necessary to return to Sherman. When this done the second battle spoken of as offered the Confederates will be understood.

General Hurlbut's camp had been pitched behind the sites chosen by Prentiss and Stuart, and he knew himself in reserve subject to call from the front. Notified about seven-thirty o'clock of Sherman's need, he hur-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ried his Second Brigade (Veatch's) to that officer's support. Then, in a few minutes, he received an urgent request for aid from Prentiss, and responded, leading his First and Third brigades in person. As he drew near Prentiss's left-rear the latter's men drifted through his formation in broken masses. The moral effect of an endangered flank added to a front attack had wrought its usual result.

Now, as I infer, Hurlbut moved from camp thinking to establish himself in the gap between Stuart and Prentiss, first clearing it of invaders; but seeing himself too late, he halted opportunely, and deployed his brigades at an obtuse angle with one another, putting a battery in the angle and one on each flank. With the two fronts, southerly and southwesterly, he flattered himself his retired flanks were safe.

The Third Brigade on the southerly front was the first attacked. The shock took place in an uncleared grove; and we can imagine how the fierce contention moiled it as no wind of strength had ever done. Half an hour thus, and the Confederates were shaken off.

Then the First Brigade took its turn; while advancing "doubled on the centre" a column moved forward aimed apparently at the angle of the formation. The spectacle must have been rarely beautiful speeding across the open field, but the rain of fire poured upon it was too much, and it melted away; after which the brigades refilled their cartridge-boxes and took breath. In the same pause Prentiss passed to Hurlbut's right with a part of his division rallied, prolonging the line in the direction of McClernand. Thereupon the Confederates repeated their attack, and were repulsed, but came again, and then again.

Meantime, Colonel Veatch had planted his brigade (Hurlbut's Second) at McClernand's left, where it nobly

supported that officer.<sup>1</sup> Still the gap between Veatch and Prentiss was fearfully wide and bare, the advanced ground having been swept clean of defenders; and of the whole army there was none to fill it but W. H. L. Wallace, to whom we must now look.

The Second Division belonged to General Charles F. Smith. In his absence—dying at the Cherry house in Savannah—General W. H. L. Wallace commanded it. Its field return, April 5th, gives a total of eight thousand seven hundred and eight officers and men. It was, in fact, the next largest division of the army; yet when one seeks to get at the part it bore in the battle, he must do some signal groping through the official reports. General W. H. L. Wallace fell mortally wounded; when we ask of the circumstances of the casualty, we rise pained and astonished at the meagreness of detail. General MacArthur, who succeeded him in the command, does not so much as mention the name of the brave unfortunate. Colonel Tuttle, to whom the division fell, when MacArthur was wounded, has this to say: "In passing through the cross-fire General Wallace fell mortally wounded." He does not give the place of the occurrence or so much as a suggestion of the hour. Fortunately a beautiful monument erected on the field by his grateful state (Illinois) marks the fatal spot, and will forever commemorate his soldierly virtues.

Let me now try and make an orderly story of what befell the Second Division.

General W. H. L. Wallace, in his camp on the road to Crump's from Pittsburg Landing, received Prentiss's message announcing the enemy present in force about seven-thirty o'clock. His horse was at his tent door

<sup>1</sup> General McClelland, in his official report, says he was unsupported on his left. He was mistaken; at least the weight of testimony is against him.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ready saddled.<sup>1</sup> Accepting the notice as a request for help, he lost no time getting his brigades (Tuttle's, MacArthur's, and Sweeny's) under arms and moving out with them.

The march continued to a point beyond General Hurlbut's headquarters.<sup>2</sup>

The sight of greatest frequency on this advance had a moral effect according to the nature of those beholding it. The roads, the woods, the fields were grewsome with officers and men in flight; whereat the timid grew weaker and the strong stronger.

There is no trouble determining that General W. H. L. Wallace's position was central of the new line; or, more particularly, Prentiss held the ground at his left, with Hurlbut beyond Prentiss, and Stuart beyond Hurlbut, leaving Veatch and McClernand next him on the right, and Sherman beyond McClernand.<sup>3</sup> It was, indeed, the very gap in which he was wanted. How the good soldier came to establish himself there, whether upon his own initiative or after consultation, may not be said. Only this much is certain, with the Second Division in the theretofore empty interval the second battle front of the staggering Army of the Tennessee was continuous from Sherman to Stuart, including McClernand, Veatch, Wallace, Prentiss, and Hurlbut, in order from the right.

As it is now to be seen what became of this second line, I think it well to come to the help of the reader with diagram No. 2. In comparing it with diagram No. 1 he should remember it is barely nine o'clock—that with the Second Division in position, the last of the reserves is employed—that courage, common-sense,

<sup>1</sup> Badeau's *Life of Grant*, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Woods, in *War Records*, series 1, vol. x., p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> Colonel Shaw, in *War Records*, series 1, vol. x, p. 153.

## LEW WALLACE



DIAGRAM NO. 2

and tacit understanding have voluntarily done the work of an intelligent commanding general—lastly, that General Grant and his staff are descending the gang-plank of the *Tigress* down at the Landing, having just arrived from Savannah.

The object now clearly in the purpose of every Union officer engaged, capable of thought, and not to be lost to mind by the reader, is staying the enemy until night or Buell comes. In view of this limitation, and studying the present front offered, it really seemed as if the army were safe—indeed, that it stood a chance of victory. Let us see.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

General Johnston was not slow in comprehending the new situation, and, in appreciation of the heavy work it demanded, he, too, entered upon a rearrangement which I find very difficult to set down except in general terms. As well as I can make out, however, he called Breckinridge up with his reserves, consisting then of two brigades, giving him a place on the Confederate right in co-operation with Chalmers and Jackson. He also summoned all remaining of Polk's corps, and distributed them; and of the chief commanders, Polk, with three brigades, had left-centre of the attack, with Pond and Cleburne on his left, and Stewart and Gibson at his right. Then the order was completed—Stephens on the right of Gibson, then Gladden, then Jackson and Chalmers—all these latter with brigades.

What of command fell to the other corps commanders, Hardee and Bragg, I cannot make out. They seem to have been free-lances, ranging at pleasure, but with one duty in common—driving forward every organization on their side.

So, as a main point, we are now to see and think of everything of the Army of the Tennessee in one connected line, and opposite them everything of fighting aspect belonging to the Confederates—Johnston leading the right wing, Beauregard directing the left, and somewhere under them the division commanders, Clark, Stewart, Cheatham, Ruggles, and Withers.

It is nine-thirty o'clock and the crisis of the battle.

General Grant's was not a mind to be easily shaken or stunned—a statement amply proved in course of his remarkable career—yet the signs he met at the Landing the morning in question, must have been a surprise and a trial. The fugitives so often spoken of were already gathering under the bluff, an unreasoning rabble of

wild men from every command, without arms, and momentarily increasing in number. The way to the summit took him through their midst. There is nothing to show that he stopped to speak to them, or, as did Nelson in the afternoon, that he ramped about cursing and threatening them. In his *Memoirs* he apologizes for their misconduct. Nevertheless, their appearance there at that early hour was appalling.

He was suffering with a lame leg got from a fall of his horse the Friday preceding, and going was painful. Where he betook himself first I cannot say. We hear of him from Prentiss, who says he left with him an order to hold the position he then occupied at all hazards; and there was never an order more faithfully observed. We hear of him also from Sherman; so, in likelihood, he must have visited every one of the division commanders. He made no changes with them. It was too late for that, and he was sensible enough to know it. We hear of him next from General Buell, who had a conference with him on the *Tigress*, and speaks of him as calm, and considering the offensive for the next day. The trend of the battle, however, was adverse, and he doubtless recognized the fact.

The struggle that ensued, with General Grant a participant, was in many respects so like a second battle—the first one having terminated in favor of the Confederates—that I venture to treat it as such. Then, to stimulate the imagination, and help to a realization of the contest, its horrors and characteristics, its unlikenesses to anything of the battle kind of previous enactment in this country or elsewhere, I think it in place to submit a few descriptive generalities in group.

Beginning at nine o'clock, the new engagement endured quite six hours—not continuously or all along the front at the same time, but at short intervals, breaking



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

out, as it were, in spots—although there was not a moment of the time in which the firing entirely ceased. This will be understood, perhaps, when I say that at one place in the line the Confederates were repulsed, and there was silence while they rallied and reformed; while at another place, the Unionists, dislodged from one position, fell back to another, and while they rallied and reformed there was silence on their part.

The exchange of fire was not merely of infantry, but artillery as well. The spells were few and brief in which there was no pounding by batteries. Above the shallow arcs described by Minié balls whistling through the brush and under the low limbs of trees—above them, up in the air, shells crossed one another, and, bursting, rained iron fragments upon the earth below; and against them all places were alike, with refuge in none.

The men of the South relieved their fever of the fight by shrill yelps—I use the word for description, not in derision—as distinguishable from cheers or hurrahs; while on the part of their foes the resistance, even the dying, was in grim silence.

It was not an opportunity for cavalry; the natural obstructions were too many. Charges were attempted, but unsuccessfully. Even Forrest failed, and Clanton, John Morgan, Wharton, Lindsay, and Phil Thompson all prudently held back. The *sabreurs* of the North, with like good sense, heard the combats at a distance.

Of horses, the carcasses discovered when, after the fighting, the field had to be cleansed, were mostly of the batteries, with a percentage belonging to field and staff officers. The number burned or buried was one of the astonishing features.

There is a particular in connection with the battle of Shiloh which trained European soldiers cannot be brought to understand. They have been taught the

necessity of manœuvre in bodies. Here tactics was so limited it may almost be said there was no tactics. Deployment was a preliminary; advances were rarely in column; retreats were rushes to the rear, just as charges were rushes forward. This because few of the combatants were *au fait* in drill. In fact, whole regiments were unable to load by the manual, and had the crudest idea of alignment by guides right, left, or centre. Hurrying down a hollow, tearing across a swamp, squeezing through thickets, of what account was touch of the elbow? The parade line gone—broken into squads—not infrequently operating single-handed—there was but one cohesive principle of possible practice—to watch the flag and stay by it. One referring to Kinglake's account of Inkerman and Bala-klava is struck by the order and machine-like regularity of the movement described. On every page there are flashes of splendors in the battle to cover its horrors. At Shiloh there was nothing on either side to relieve the butchery but heroism.

So it happened that long before the six hours were over the two armies as a general thing degenerated into mere fighting swarms, with only the flags to give them unity. Individuals found it impossible to distinguish their rightful companies. Regiments lost their brigades; brigades passed indifferently or not observing to near divisions. In the frightful *mêlée* officers, separated from their men, took command without question of others unknown to them. With bodies that kept together intact the confusion and involvement were such that not unfrequently it was troublesome to discern the right front or decide in what direction to fire.

Such, I say, are some of the features of this battle, making it forever incomprehensible to foreigners of

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

military training, and an unmitigated hell to the memories of all who happily came out of it alive.

These remarks may seem like digression; nevertheless, I think they prepare us to go on to the end of the day, the question being not, Could the Army of the Tennessee win, but could it keep the field until Buell came?<sup>1</sup>

How best to proceed from this point with the narrative is a problem. The objects—clearness and justice—must govern; so at least it seems to me. Wherefore, since the battle on the part of the Unionists was in the beginning engagements by divisions acting separately, and as it continued such to the close, notwithstanding the presence of General Grant, I will accept the suggestion and be ruled by it.

### *The Fifth Division—General Sherman*

At nine o'clock, the lines being reformed and the struggle about to begin anew everywhere, General Sherman was still master of the position occupied by him in the morning. Cleburne had been repulsed. Pond stood inactive, though in view, beyond Shiloh Run. McDowell, of Sherman's right brigade, faced Pond, and also kept the bluff overlooking Owl Creek and the bridge crossing it on the road from Pittsburg Landing. Sherman lent his presence for the most part to Buckland in the vicinity of the old church.

I have difficulty defining McClernand's position at this juncture relatively to Sherman; but as the former

<sup>1</sup> That such was the question with General Grant returned from the front—accounting for his presence on the steamboat when met by General Buell—is settled, I think, by the note he hurried to the Commanding Officer, "Advance Forces, Buell's Army near Pittsburg Landing," telling him, among other things, "If you will get upon the field, leaving all your baggage on the east bank of the river, it will be more to our advantage, and possibly save the day to us."—Quoted in *Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, p. 603.



says in his report that before his left, consisting of his Third Brigade, could form for support of Sherman the enemy was pressing upon it five regiments deep, the inference is that at the moment of collision his division had not advanced, but was somewhere to Sherman's rear—probably at his left, Veatch being still on the march. The interval between Buckland and McClernand, of unknown depth, I take to have been the scene of the struggle from which Hindman had been borne the worse of a shell.

This period, I also think, was one of rest for Sherman, except for the annoyance from skirmishers and sharp-shooters in the thickets of the little creek in his front, and the iterative handiwork of battery-men in the enthusiasm of first practice.

It was at this time General Sherman did a thing of pertinency to myself. Riding to Captain Behr, of the Morton (Indiana) battery, he ordered him to send two of his guns to take care of the bridge over Owl Creek, saying, in explanation that the bridge must be held at all hazards, as General Lew Wallace was coming up from Crump's Landing to cross the creek there. Behr thereupon detached Lieutenant Bieler with a section of the battery for the duty. Bieler took post at the bridge supported by two companies of infantry, and kept it, successfully resisting attack, until McDowell on the bluff retired. The lieutenant made his escape with difficulty, bringing off one gun.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The action of General Sherman given in the text is upon the authority of Lieutenant Bieler, for many years past a worthy citizen of Indianapolis. His account in writing is in my possession. The pertinency is to the controversy which arose as to the order put in my hand at Stoney Lonesome, eleven-thirty o'clock, by Captain Baxter, directing me to march to the right of the army. General Sherman expected me to join him by the very road I took in starting; from which it would appear he does not concur in the opinion expressed by General Grant that under an order to join the right



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The comparative tranquillity along Sherman's front lasted until about ten o'clock. By that time McClernand had been forced rearward some hundreds of yards, and, nothing then interposing, the enemy got artillery behind Buckland's left flank. To stay longer was to be cut off, seeing which Sherman ordered the two brigades back into a second position. They had but few minutes to go upon. Then, Behr being killed and his guns taken, another retirement ensued. This brought Sherman and McClernand into direct connection, and thenceforward they acted in concert. Hour after hour passed, the two holding the line with desperate tenacity and varying fortune. Here Sherman, besides having several horses killed under him, received his second hurt—in the shoulder—and he was never more conspicuously great. General Grant well says in his *Memoirs*: "A casualty to Sherman that would have taken him from the field that day would have been a sad one for the troops engaged at Shiloh. And how near we came to this!"

About four o'clock, Sherman, in concert with McClernand, selected a last line of defence, covering the bridge over Snake Creek by which my division was then coming. There at bay the remains of the Fifth Division rested for the evening and the night.

### *The First Division—General McClernand*

Observing the enemy forging around its flanks, General McClernand ordered his Third Brigade, after its

of the army I should have first marched to Pittsburg Landing. On the contrary, Sherman's judgment was in direct support of mine; and I confess to finding great comfort in the fact.

Lieutenant Bieler's statement is corroborated in part by Colonel McDowell; only the latter speaks of but one of Behr's guns commanding the bridge, a twelve-pounder howitzer.—*War Records*, series 1, vol. x., p. 254.

disastrous charge, to fall back again—this time presumably upon the division in line of battle not far from the general's headquarters. The fierceness of the general attack, wing and wing, that came next may be judged by what happened to the batteries.

Burrow's, in the centre, was quickly a total loss. The captain and several of his officers were wounded and seventy horses killed.

McAllister's had to be withdrawn, one piece abandoned, no horses to take it off. McAllister himself was four times wounded.

Schwartz's, less a caisson, had to be brought away by hand.

Out-flanked on his right, McClernand again went to the rear, leaving one regiment to cut its way through a close environment. Another battery — Timony's—then went into action, losing four guns.

Stiffening up here, at sight of the enemy checked, McClernand ordered a charge. But again out-flanked, right and left, he again went back, this time making connection with Sherman. Once more he turned upon his persecutors, and drove them with fearful slaughter. Two of his regiments, the Eleventh and Twentieth Illinois, even captured a battery.

Useless valor!

Ammunition failed several of the regiments, and presently another position to the rear had to be sought; and there, in a breathing spell, the command resupplied itself with cartridges. Another fight, and, under cover of the fragments of batteries left him, the obstinate Illinoisan retired to a sixth position, where, besides repulsing the infantry in his front, he repelled a charge of cavalry.

It was then four-thirty o'clock.

All through this weary time, though as little as pos-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sible is said of it by General McClelland, he was supported on his left by Colonel Veatch and on his right by General Sherman. He does not mention whether they participated in his last successful charge.

Suddenly, in the seventh stand, a new enemy came down on the division now frightfully reduced in number—one not anticipated, and against which resistance was of little use. A multitude mixed of fugitive soldiery, teamsters, and wagon-trains, long pent-up in that part of the field somewhere, now broke loose, and in its mad rush for safety and the Landing struck the left and Veatch's regiments, shattering them, and leaving but a nucleus on which to reform.

Another retirement, the eight and last! And night and rain; no help for the wounded, and sleep, who could?

### *Second Division—W. H. L. Wallace*

The Second Division, standing between Prentiss and Veatch, the latter at McClelland's left, is to be thought of as materially shorn of its reported strength. Less the entire Second Brigade, Brigadier-General MacArthur, ordered early to the support of Stuart and the Eighty-first Ohio and the Thirteenth Missouri, its total in line was five thousand three hundred and seventy-five officers and men. Of these the First Brigade (Tuttle's), on the left, was the first to be attacked.

Deliberate choice could scarcely have bettered the position into which this brigade had been accidentally dropped. It was on rising ground, hardly a hill, masked by a thicket. In front spread an open field practically not unlike the glacis of a regular fortification. Everything approaching by the field could be seen perfectly from the thicket. To add to the strength of the position, behind it full length ran a road sunk by the wash-

ing of rains to a depth of one and two feet, sometimes three. A man lying in the road could load and fire without exposure except of the head while firing. In short, a ditch carefully designed had not been more serviceable for defence than this sunken roadway. The cotton bales at New Orleans—saying they were used by General Jackson—were not nearly so effective, since the artillery, of which a hurricane was here brought to bear, would have knocked them into the air like so many old hats.

The roadway, it is to be further said, extended beyond the left of the First Brigade, and that portion of it was occupied by fragments of four of Prentiss's regiments, not exceeding five hundred men.<sup>1</sup>

I have been at care in the description of this position because of what was done in it; more particularly because in my judgment it was the spot on which the fury of the general onslaught spent itself—because the hours lost to the Confederates there were of more value to their Cause than the blood they spilled, as if it were water—*the hours gone, Buell had come*. Afterwards, in the tearful humor of sorrow, they devised a name for the place—"The Hornet's Nest."

And now to beget a proper appreciation of the work of W. H. L. Wallace's Second Division, and its First Brigade in especial, I think it best to cross to the Confederates and follow the attack; we will in that way have a chance of seeing who the assailants were, how they behaved, what befell them, and at the same time of measuring the worth of the achievement of the assailed. I know nothing more honorable, nothing greater, in fact, than going down in the bitter waters of defeat holding victory overhead.

<sup>1</sup> The Twenty-first Missouri, the Eighteenth Missouri, the Twelfth Michigan, and the Eighteenth Wisconsin.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

There had been an agreement, we are told, between Bragg and Polk parcelling the command between them; Polk taking the left centre and Bragg the right centre.<sup>1</sup> This brought Bragg in front of W. H. L. Wallace; and by his direction A. P. Stewart, in command of Hindman's brigade and his own, was the first to make trial of what lay behind the thicket masking the sunken road on the low hill-top.<sup>2</sup>

These were the brigades that had so successfully dealt with Prentiss's right in the first engagement. Inspired, confident, they now raised their flags, and their yell, and set on. Not a man of them reached the thicket, though they tried heroically and often. Bragg was urgent, but he asked the impossible. Where whole regiments had failed, what could dazed fragments do?

Then Bragg turned to the First Arkansas, and the Fourth, Thirteenth, and Nineteenth Louisiana—Gibson's brigade—Gibson supported by three colonels all of whom afterwards became brigadiers of note<sup>3</sup>—Gibson himself chivalrous as a Paladin. In the open field, plied with musketry and shrapnel and canister, they all stopped, seeing no enemy, and scorched, as it were, by an inner fire of the earth. To stay stopped there was to perish to a man. Back they went, Gibson with them. He asked for artillery. Bragg replied, ordering another charge. Again the brigades set on. This time they reached the foot of the hill; a few died on the hill-side. Again they formed and charged—in vain. Allen, of the Fourth Louisiana, after the third trial, rode to Bragg for artillery, and to ask if the assault

<sup>1</sup> *Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, p. 604.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart's brigade consisted of the Fourth Tennessee, the Fifth Tennessee, the Thirty-third Tennessee, the Thirteenth Arkansas, and Stanford's battery.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, p. 605.

must be repeated. Bragg told him, pitilessly, that he wanted no faltering; and as might have been expected, the fourth rush was the most persistent and terrible of all, but equally useless. At last, heroism having done everything vainly except exhaust itself, both of the assaulting brigades stood at the farther side of the field beaten to a stand-still and counting their losses.

An hour—two hours—three thus—hours literally of horror heaped on horror's head!

Meantime, Ruggles, of Bragg's First Division, clearer of brain than his chief, by dint of hard riding assembled all the field-guns that could be reached—eleven batteries in all<sup>1</sup>—and with them in irresistible concentration enfiladed the remains of Prentiss's division on its right flank, forcing it out of position; and when it was gone Wallace's First Brigade, resting in its part of the sunken road, was left bare of support on that side.

In the mean time, also, General Polk, having thrown Veatch and McClelland out of his path, turned a part of his command to the right, striking fair and full upon W. H. L. Wallace's right flank. For Wallace then there was nothing but retreat. His Third Brigade (Sweeny's) acted promptly; but unable to get the order in time to the First (Tuttle's), he was compelled to abandon it. The Confederates had by that time so nearly enclosed him that the escape of the First Brigade was through a deadly cross-fire. Following at the rear of the retreating line, Wallace was struck, and fell from his horse insensible. He died next day.

From this on to the close the story of W. H. L. Wallace's First Brigade is inseparable from that of Prentiss's remnants, to which we must now give attention.

<sup>1</sup> Ruggles's report, in *War Records*, series 1, vol. x., p. 472,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### *Sixth Division—Prentiss*

By two-thirty o'clock all the right wing of the Army of the Tennessee—Sherman, McClelland, Veatch—were retiring slowly to new positions Parthian-like.

At that hour W. H. L. Wallace was lying where he had fallen, and his Third Brigade had disappeared from the firing-line.

Over on the left Hurlbut was holding Stephen, Cheatham, Gladden, and Breckinridge stiffly off, while Stuart and MacArthur were making a good front against Jackson and Chalmers almost in sight of Pittsburg Landing. One company of Clanton's Confederate horsemen, passing by Stuart's left flank, had actually watered their mounts in the Tennessee River.

By this time also the gun-boats had shifted to the eastern bank of the river far as they could get without going aground, and were throwing shells of the dimensions of mess-kettles westwardly over the heads of friends and foes indiscriminately—shooting apparently at the sun then visibly in decline.

Buell had come, and, after consultation, was with Grant on the latter's boat waiting for Nelson, who was still on the farther side of the river, which he had yet to cross, with steamboats to do the ferriage—always a slow process, but in this instance slower of the impatience begot of the emergency.

All the right bent back almost to Tilghman's Creek in the northeast corner of the field; all the left bent back to a point not three-quarters of a mile from the Landing at the south; there was left a corner projecting towards the southwest, in the angle of which lay the sturdy keepers of the sunken road—Tuttle's brigade, the First of W. H. L. Wallace's division, the remains of Prentiss's division on Tuttle's left, and two regiments of Lauman's

brigade of Hurlbut's division, the Thirty-first and the Forty-fourth Indiana, on Prentiss's left; so it must be apparent, I think, if, in this situation, that corner is not held fast, neither night nor Buell can save the Army of the Tennessee. In perfect consciousness of the frightful possibilities, General Grant has ordered Colonel Webster, of his staff, to haul up all the siege-guns at the Landing, brought in anticipation of a need at Corinth, and plant them in battery on the bluff. There, behind those guns, Grant, the imperturbable, will make a last stand.

When General Hurlbut took position, helping make up the new line of battle, Prentiss, it has been said, rallied his division, and, passing to the front again, established it on Hurlbut's right. The word division should not be taken too literally. It is a curious fact that the brave leader had with him at the time but four regiments, and, as his division was scarcely a skeleton, so were the regiments. That is, the Twenty-first Missouri had 60 muskets, the Eighteenth Missouri 147, the Twelfth Michigan 109, the Eighteenth Wisconsin 174—altogether not five hundred men.<sup>1</sup> To this number one must subjoin Peabody's brigade in the line reduced to sixty muskets, and the two batteries, Hickenlooper's Fifth Ohio and Munch's First Minnesota. Prentiss had the co-operation also of the Eighth Iowa, Colonel Geddes; of Sweeny's brigade, W. H. L. Wallace's division, that crossed over and formed on Prentiss's right, not entirely filling the interval existing there. As this regiment acted with Prentiss, sharing with him in his

<sup>1</sup> This statement seems incredible; and so it would be, indeed, were it not that I have the figures on the authority of Major D. W. Reed, Historian of the Shiloh Battle Association, whom I regard better informed of the battle and all its incidents, first and last, than any person living.



fight and in his ultimate surrender, I think it proper to count it his.

To tell now what the Sixth Division—calling it such—did in repelling Ruggles and Gibson in their repeated rushes upon the defenders in the sunken road would be repetition.

But now—two-thirty o'clock—comes an incident of appalling consequence to Prentiss. Hurlbut had shifted Lauman across to his left, taking the Indiana regiment away and exposing Prentiss's flank. This was the time Ruggles took to assemble the eleven batteries; then, when they were in position and all ready, he flung their united fire upon Prentiss at the point of his junction with Tuttle, enflading his line, Geddes included, from right to left. No one unless he has been in a cyclone, the air above him filled and darkened with stones, fencing, the fragments of trees, and the débris of collapsed houses, can form an idea, even the faintest, of the violence of the tempest thus let loose. It was an iron sleet to drive an iron wall in. It had not been so terrible blown from the front; but, sweeping the road endwise, it was not in human nature to stand in the way of its fury. Hickenlooper and Munch, his associate, and Stone and Richards, of the two Missouri batteries, all on the rise in rear of Prentiss and Tuttle, answered with becoming vigor; nevertheless, Prentiss's skeleton regiments arose from their cover in the hollow of the road, now no longer a cover, and ran out of it; at the same time the Confederates, rushing, swung them round until they brought up back to back with Tuttle's brigade and not more than a hundred and fifty yards between them. Then Bragg, seeing the opportunity, called to Ruggles and Gibson, by that time reformed, and despatched them headlong and yelling over the reddened field of their discomfiture.

Four o'clock—five o'clock—still the mill in the corner kept grinding, still Bragg and his thousands lost precious time hammering at it.

At three o'clock Hurlbut retired his division, leaving all who chose free to close in upon Prentiss.

At four Breckinridge, Cheatham, and Jackson filled the space between the Hornet's Nest and the Landing; and there, happily, they too stayed. General Johnston was dead, and his mantle was not to his successor's taste.

At five-thirty o'clock Prentiss surrendered, leaving Tuttle's men still in the road subject to fire from three directions. Presently their ammunition failed and they were themselves exhausted. It was time for them to give up. Sacrifice of such lives had been a hideous crime. Colonel Shaw, of the Fourteenth Iowa, last of the brigade to surrender, yielded his sword at fifteen minutes of six o'clock.<sup>1</sup>

The army was then safe. Ammen's brigade of Nelson's division of the Army of the Ohio stood deployed in front of Webster's battery on the height above the Landing, and others were following. Beauregard was withdrawing his army to Shiloh Church for the night—and the day unwon was done.

#### *The Fourth Division—Hurlbut*

We have seen the part of the Fourth Division in the first engagement; that at its conclusion Cheatham,

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Shaw is said to have told of the ceremony of his surrender. "We were firing front and rear. The smoke was suffocating, but through it, coming towards me, I presently made out a man dressed in gray—an officer, I thought. Stopping six or eight feet from me, he saluted with his sword, and, dropping the point, said, in a most unexcited way, 'Colonel, somebody must surrender, and I don't think it's me.' The words brought me to myself. 'I think you are right. Wait a moment,' I replied, and, ordering my men to cease firing, gave up my sword."

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

whom fortune had selected as Hurlbut's antagonist, had the worst of his repeated charges. Indeed, so decided were the repulses that General Johnston, in the reformation for the second engagement, drew upon his reserves under General Breckinridge, whom, with the brigades of Bowen and Statham, he posted between Chalmers and Jackson on the extreme right next to the river.

To appreciate the struggle which then took place, one must have an idea of the relative positions of the opposing forces.

Hurlbut's line, drawn back almost at a right angle to what I have called the corner held by his regiments, the Thirty-first and Forty-fourth Indiana, lay on the crest of a ridge partly wooded, partly open. In his front the ground sloped unevenly into a hollow, across which, seventy-five or eighty yards away, arose another ridge covering Breckinridge and his brigades, the while he manœuvred them into line with Chalmers and Bowen. The two ridges kept a semblance of parallelism trending towards the river. With musketry and three batteries—my Minnesingers of Chicago among them—Hurlbut swept the Confederate height as with brooms of fire. It had been the scene of Cheatham's repulses, and was not easier of occupation now; yet, the offensive being with Breckinridge, it had to be crossed.

There was trouble in getting the Confederate warriors to the crest of their ridge—great trouble. Indeed, the battle went lame there a long time.<sup>1</sup> Harris, of Ten-

<sup>1</sup> The author of *The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston* had much to say of this crisis of the battle, all so dramatically interesting that I presume to make extracts from the book:

"It was in this condition of things that Breckinridge rode up to General Johnston, and, in his preoccupation, not observing Governor Harris, said, 'General, I have a Tennessee regiment that won't fight.' Harris broke in energetically, 'General Breckinridge, show



nessee, and General Johnston himself had to come and add their persuasive influences to Breckinridge's. At last a start was made; after which the two ridges smoked and shook with the roar and trample of the combat.

It was not enough to hold the height; the Confederates had now to go down into the hollow and up the opposite slope. No one knew the value of moments then as did General Johnston. The afternoon was going, Buell was coming. He spurred his horse in among the halting men, and, tapping the bayonets familiarly with his hand, called out: "I will lead you. Come on!"

*me* that regiment.' Breckinridge courteously and apologetically indicated the command, and General Johnston said, 'Let the governor go to them.' Governor Harris went, and with some difficulty put the regiment in line of battle on the hill. After some delay, the wavering still increasing, General Johnston directed that the line be got ready for a charge. Breckinridge soon returned, and said he feared he could not get the brigade to make the charge. General Johnston replied to him, cheerfully, 'Oh yes, general, I think you can.' Breckinridge . . . told him he had tried and failed. 'Then I will help you,' said General Johnston. 'We can get them to make the charge.' Turning to Governor Harris, who had come back to report that the Tennessee regiment was in line, he requested him to return and encourage this regiment, then some distance to his right but under his eye, and to aid in getting them to charge. Harris galloped to the right, and, breaking in among the soldiers with a sharp harangue, dismounted and led them afoot, pistol in hand, up to their alignment, and in the charge when it was made.

"In the mean time, Breckinridge, with his fine voice and manly bearing, was appealing to the soldiers, aided by his son, Cabell, and a very gallant staff. It was a goodly company; and in the charge Breckinridge, leading and towering above them all, was the only one who escaped unscathed. . . . Cabell Breckinridge, then a mere boy, rode close by his father during all this stirring scene.

"General Johnston rode out in front, and slowly down the line. His hat was off. His sword rested in its scabbard. In his right hand he held a little tin cup. . . . His presence was full of inspiration. . . . He sat his beautiful thoroughbred bay, 'Fire-eater,' with easy command. . . . His words were few. He touched their bayonets with significant gesture. . . . When he reached the centre of the line he turned. 'I will lead you!' he said, and moved towards the enemy. . . . Right up the steep they went."



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

With that he turned his horse down the hillock. The firing ceased; and with a yell that drowned the sputter of musketry and the fast booming of batteries, the regiments took to a run and streamed after him. Breckinridge, not far away, caught the cue from his chief; and as if there was not enough in his voice and magnificent presence to stimulate all who were of his following to the daring the crisis required, next him rode his son, a mere boy, at the sight of whom the dullest soul in the seething movement knew how much of interest more than life the father had in the risk he was braving.

Three o'clock now.

All this time Chalmers had been slowly thrusting his right round Stuart between him and the river; and Stuart, seeing retreat to the Landing about cut off, hurried a messenger to tell Hurlbut of his situation, and that he (Hurlbut) would be flanked in a few minutes. "Then," says Hurlbut, "it was necessary for me to decide at once to abandon either the right or left." Deciding promptly, he yielded the ridge to the advancing Confederates and retired his whole line. This without notice to Prentiss and Tuttle; so they were left alone in the sunken road.

Hurlbut, capable and obstinately brave, would have continued the fight in positions at the rear, as McClelland and Sherman were doing; often as he looked over his shoulder, however, it was to see the enemy at his left in masses pouring eagerly forward to get between him and the Landing. A rally, as he saw it then, meant a vain, profitless sacrifice of the men, and he followed them, preferring—what had become for him and them the better part—to be counted out of the struggle, that last humiliation of a strong spirit in battle.

Strange to say now, it fell to the Sixth Division, disrupted and in retreat though it was, to inflict upon the

## LEW WALLACE

Confederates the deadliest of imaginable injuries. A soldier, loath, doubtless, to show his back to the foe, turned and, shooting at random, mortally wounded General Albert Sidney Johnston.

There came then immediately an observable lull in the battle—in the sounds, in the general movement. While in the mire and watery depths beyond Snake Creek I noticed and wondered at it. A sentimentalist might say it was the voluntary, poetic tribute of an army to its fallen leader. Not so. Beauregard, risen to first in command, was halting everything of his, preliminary to a return to Corinth. Military talent may not be denied General Beauregard; he was simply in control of a body composed of men whom he did not understand. In that lull Nelson's division of the Army of the Ohio crossed the river.

I do not care to dwell upon the Army of the Tennessee or its condition, crowded for the night on the bluffs and under them at Pittsburg Landing. That is a subject to be left to such as delight in great disasters and find bread and wine in wholesale horrors.

## LVII

John, the horse—Brown's battery—Thurber—General Wallace in battle—An artillery duel—General Grant in the field—No orders—The struggle at Tilghman's Creek—Whittlesey—Brown out of ammunition—Colonel Stuart—The drummer-boys—Woods and the Seventy-sixth Ohio—The dead in the field—The deserted camp.

JOHN, the good horse, had shared the night with me close by my sheltering tree. He was wet through and through, and, like myself, more than willing to be in motion.

"Ah, well the gallant brute I knew!"

The rain had quit, but, chilled and dissatisfied, I confess myself in a very unjoyous spirit. Indeed, I would willingly have shuffled off what was before me, could it have been done leaving a good taste in my mouth. A cup of coffee, home-made, sweet and sparkling brown, would have helped me, but I was far away and too anxious to wait for a creature comfort of any kind. So, allowing the officers of my staff and the orderlies to have their "beauty nap" out—I smile at the irony of the expression now—I rode first thing to the point on the brow of the hill to which I had guided the Ninth Indiana battery in the night. The company were at their guns, First Lieutenant George Brown in command.

Afterwhile the mist arose out of the hollow of the creek (Tilghman's) before us, and the murk of the night with it, and through the cold, gray light of the cloudy dawn not yet fairly come we could see faintly across to

the opposite height—or, rather, to the scumbled mass of trees covering the height. I judged it about five o'clock.

"That will do," I said to Brown.

"I take it to be about four hundred yards," he answered.

"Very well. Try it at that."

He went to each gun, aiming it himself. Then at his word the six all spoke in volley—and the damp stillness overhanging the spreading battle-field far and near was broken. They were the first guns fired by either side that 7th of April, the second day of the battle at Shiloh.

The lieutenant and I waited. Three—five minutes passed—and they were minutes of suspense.

"They are slow coming to time," said Brown.

"They may not be there," I suggested.

The words were hardly out of my mouth when, presto! the hill-top on the other side of the hollow, trees and all, were shut out by a curtain ghostly white, and the face of the height on our side turned red and black with flying earth. The enemy had aimed too low.

"They are there," I said.

"Yes, but they haven't the range," Brown answered, with a chuckle.

There came a roar then of a battery to our right a short distance.

"That's Thurber."

And Brown answered. "A smart fellow! He waited for the rebels to tell him where to fire."

"Eleven pieces to six. You ought to knock them out soon."

Brown nodded and became busy, for the duel was on; and I left him to look after the brigades.

The light being by that time clear as might be expected of a cloudy morning, I could see the position



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

into which I had brought the division.<sup>1</sup> The First Brigade, Colonel Morgan L. Smith, stood formed in a field open and large enough to accommodate it. The line of the regiments extended north and south, or nearly so. At the right there were a fence and a road pointing to the west. Beyond the road and another fence, the Second Brigade, Colonel John M. Thayer's, extended the line of formation. I had the fences thrown down, and rode to Colonel Whittlesey, in command of the Third Brigade. Thayer's brigade and Whittlesey's were in a field also open and on its west side parallel with the hollow of Tilghman's Creek.

Fires had been kindled and cooking was going on despite the noisy interchange of the guns and the ills of the rainy night. As I was returning from Thurber, whom I found too busy to pay attention to me further than to touch his cap, a soldier of the First Nebraska asked me to breakfast with his mess. The hospitality was accepted with thanks; and, dismounting, I shared his bacon and coffee. I have yet a vivid recollection of the deliciousness of the fare, for I had gone without supper the day before and was hungry.

All this time the artillery duel continued without interruption. When I returned to the field occupied by Colonel Smith, he had shifted his central regiment to the rear of the one on the right—this to get it out of the

<sup>1</sup> The following is a description of him as he appeared one memorable morning.—S. E. W., 1905.

"I shall never forget the splendid picture the man and scene presented. The sun was barely rising of a cold, frosty morning. General Wallace was a princely figure, particularly in the saddle, and he rode a handsome blooded roan stallion, a single-stepper that was the pride of the division. As he came riding up, his military accoutrements flashing in the red light of the rising sun, and the charger moving as though to the sound of music, he presented a sight that is not seen more than once in a lifetime."—*General John M. Thayer*, of Nebraska.

line of fire from the Confederate battery, Brown's being to the front two or three hundred yards in the same enclosure.

I had, of course, to wait for orders; and, to be found easily, I betook myself to the road to Crump's, passing just in rear of the division. Any person seeking me from Pittsburg Landing must come by that road.

The waiting was not long. Presently General Grant came towards me, with one orderly at his back. I rode to meet him.

"Good-morning," he said, pulling rein.

He spoke in an ordinary tone, cheerful and wholly free from excitement. From his look and manner no one could have inferred that he had been beaten in a great battle only the day before. If he had studied to be undramatic, he could not have succeeded better.

I saluted and returned his greeting.

"You are ready?" and, understanding him to have reference to advancing with the division, I replied, "Yes, sir—ready."

The cannonading and musketry had then become general; all to the south the air was alive with sounds signifying battle.

General Grant said next, "Well, ride with me."

We passed into the field close behind the First Brigade. There, looking to the right, he could see into the other field and get the direction of the alignment by the colors. He studied the view for a moment, then turned his horse, facing to the west, and said, waving his hand, "Move out that way."

"That is west," I remarked.

"Yes," he returned.

Beyond that there was no exchange of words—no gossip, no allusion to the affair of yesterday, much less an explanation of it. In fact, from anything said

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by him I could not have guessed there had been a previous battle.

General Grant left me. When he had gone some yards, I galloped after him.

"Pardon me, general," I said, "but is there any special formation you would like me to take in attacking?"

He replied, "No, I leave that to your discretion."

"I will be supported, of course?"

"I will see to that," he said.<sup>1</sup>

I would like in passing to observe, though not in the way of complaint or accusation, that this conversation turned out, before the day was over, to be chiefly remarkable for what General Grant did not tell me. Thus, he did not tell me of the ground over which I had to go with my division. It may be he knew nothing of it. He did not tell me by whom I was to be supported. He gave me no hint of the condition of the divisions engaged the day before, or of the order of battle now—things that would have been of great help to me in understanding my relations to it. Above all, he did not tell me the Army of the Ohio was on the field, commander and all. Why he withheld *that*, when there was every reason for communicating it to me, I have never had explained.

This last point is really so extraordinary it may excite wonder. In my behalf, however, the reader is besought to remember that I had been at Crump's, out of communication with the rest of the army; that I had come up in the night and gone into position without an opportunity to inform myself of the situation—indeed, that with exception of Sergeant Kaufman and a few wanderers through the night, all probably as igno-

<sup>1</sup> The conversation took place under fire, a circumstance that probably made it briefer than it would have been.

rant as myself, General Grant and his orderly were the only persons I had met.

My principal concern, as will be perceived from the inquiry addressed to General Grant, had reference to the support I was to have in moving out as directed by him. His assurance that he would see to it was sufficient, and I set about the duty before me cheerfully, but with a resolution to be cautious and circumspect.

My first step was to ride to my brigade commanders. I found them ready and waiting, and advised them of the order just received. We would move, I told them, by *echelon* of regiments, a manœuvre in which it was all-important that the intervals be strictly kept; that the left regiment of the first brigade must be recognized as the guide for the division, governing in the matter of direction; if it halted, the other regiments were to advance rapidly as possible and align upon it. I directed them also to deploy the flank companies of each regiment forward as skirmishers; that if batteries were to be attacked it should be by skirmishers instructed to shoot at the horses rather than the men. This because, in my opinion, the cannon had never been cast of value equal to the life of one good soldier. The final direction I emphasized—that at halts under fire line-officers and men were to be ordered to lie down, while field-officers should stand behind their commands dismounted.

The hollow in our front was really a deep gorge having in its bottom Tilghman's Creek fringed with brush and swampy. With a determined enemy on the opposite hill it had been a terrible road to go by in an assault. Fortunately, Brown and Thurber silenced the battery against which they had been pitted while I was advising with the brigade commanders. The still-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ness that fell upon the height was ample notice of the lucky circumstance, and I gave the word forward.

It was received in silence and as silently executed. The outgoing of the skirmishers reminded me of a flushing in the woods of a flock of pheasants—it was so instantaneous, so whirring-like. In my theory they were the antennæ of feelers of the division in motion; and hardly had they disappeared down the hill, plunging into the gorge, when Smith's left regiment, the Eleventh Indiana, started forward, followed precisely as in drill by all the other regiments, one by one. In the north field, behind Thayer's brigade, I watched the movement. It was an exciting and beautiful performance all through from flank to flank, arms at right-shoulder shift, no man hanging back, and the colors imparting warmth and splendor to the misty gray of the morning.

This was not later than six-thirty o'clock.

Down the hill into the hollow and across it, splashing into the swollen creek, crashing through the brush, the perfect order lost because it could not be helped, the regiments went; while Brown and Thurber, in their places, waited, if the need were, to cover the passage with their guns.

Then, shifting to the rear of the Eleventh Indiana, I took its trail; for if the height we were seeking was kept by the enemy, it would hear from him first. Next the Eleventh Indiana was the Eighth Missouri. Together they had gone up a like hill at Donelson. Would they have to repeat that operation?

Contrary to expectation, and to my great delight, the gorge was passed and the hill-top gained without the firing of a shot.<sup>1</sup> I wondered at the remissness of the Confederates. What had become of them?

<sup>1</sup> The map of the battle-field of Shiloh filed with the Association of the Army of the Tennessee by General Sherman contains an

On the brow of the hill we found a gun dismounted and the carriage of a caisson upset and badly splintered. A wounded man lying near was picked up, and we learned from him that the battery belonged to a Captain Ketchum,<sup>1</sup> supported by a brigade under a Colonel Pond.<sup>2</sup>

On the hill, the commands all up, it was necessary to halt and reform, and while that was in progress I looked for the enemy, wondering what had become of him. The glass brought the woods on the thither side of a broad, open field then in my front into view, and I observed a flitting of men in the edge of the wood. Colonel Pond had wisely fallen back, and I might look for him in position there. While studying how best to get at him, his battery opened upon us; whereupon I sent a hurry order to Thurber and Brown.

I had word then from Colonel Whittlesey. His division had been brought to a halt by Snake Creek, making room to the left a necessity unless I would permit him to break to the rear of the Second Brigade. Rather than that I moved all the brigades by the left flank, and without loss.

The shifting concluded, one of the two companies from each regiment out as skirmishers was brought in, and the colonels of brigade ordered, when next we advanced, to drop their centre regiments to the rear as

error so singular that it cannot be passed unnoticed. By that map the right of Sherman's division is represented as on the height west of Tilghman's Creek, the height now taken by my division, being the same from which my artillery dislodged the enemy.

<sup>1</sup> Ketchum held his position with remarkable pluck considering the odds against him. But at length Lieutenant Brown took to firing solid shot into the tree-tops, and the falling limbs, it is said, proved too much for the captain. He hastened to get from under them.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Preston Pond commanded a brigade of Brigadier-General Ruggles's.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

reserves. Then, Whittlesey having reported his front free of obstruction, I advanced the whole line to the edge of the field where, halted and lying down, the men were partially screened from view by a grove of scattered trees. Over on the right, where the woods were closer, they were perfectly screened.

The halt was while waiting for the support promised me by General Grant. To take notice of his earliest appearance, I rode to the front of the Eleventh Indiana a short distance. The whole field lay then under view. Its general level was broken by shallow depressions, in appearance suggestive of choppy waves on a lake. The little hills left after the cotton season pitted its face. A farm-house, with its usual accessories, arose midway, but somewhat to the left of what would be our line of advance.

Taking advantage of the opportunity, I visited Whittlesey to get a look at the muddy sea of Snake Creek, and satisfied myself it could be relied upon to take care of my right flank—that it was physically impossible for the enemy to establish themselves in the backwater and undergrowth. Observing, then, that the woods occupied by the Confederates on the other side of the field did not reach to the creek by many hundreds of yards, it seemed possible to get on their flank, force them out of position, and possibly help myself to a lot of prisoners. All the project required was to swing the Second and Third brigades to the left, pivoted on the First. Making no doubt of Sherman's appearance with his division on my left in time for the manœuvre, I set about it at once. Whittlesey advanced promptly.

I returned then and took stand again in front of the Eleventh Indiana. The action off in the south was still vociferous. It seemed creeping into the west, which was forward; whereat my impatience turned to anxiety.

Where was the support? Who was holding it back? And in the time Whittlesey was moving.

It was in that moment a round-shot tore past me travelling on a line lower than the horn of my saddle, and with a sound half swish, half roar, more vicious even than that of a rocket let loose. My horse swerved; yet I heard a noise behind me as if some one were pounding a sand-pile with a maul—a dull, heavy noise, a thud—and, turning involuntarily, I was in time to see an arm, torn from the shoulder of a soldier and stiffened like a stick, its fingers all outspread, revolving end over end in the air. It was our first casualty.

The batteries now came up. Brown I retained on the left. Thurber retook position between Thayer and Whittlesey. Still the question, where was the support? I saw the chances of a swing upon the enemy's flank growing smaller and solemnly less. Colonel Pond, if not stone blind, must divine the venture at his flank and send for support on his side.

Finally, to save Whittlesey, I ordered a movement forward, resolving to halt the division when abreast of the farm-house. Every step was then under fire, which happily did little damage on account of the range shifting with the movement.

And now we were up to the farm-house and halted again, Whittlesey and all; and, to the great relief of the regiments, Brown found a position to suit him on the descending side of a swale out in the open. His first shot drew the fire of the enemy, and instantly the duel of the morning was resumed.

All this while waiting, as I supposed, for Sherman. I looked at my watch, and was astonished—it was nearly ten o'clock!

All the while, also, the fighting went on out of my view in the south, and it seemed to be taking place in



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

advance of me. Looking in that direction, I saw at the far end of the field men in ranks crossing a road at double-quick. Could they be the support I was expecting? What were they doing there so far off? Directly a flag appeared; it passed quickly, but I had time to see it was not the flower and perfection of all flags. I hurried to Brown. As I drew nigh the envelope of smoke which was about his battery in blinding volume, a horse, large-boned and stalwart and stripped of harness, stalked out of it as if to meet me. It came slowly and stopped squarely in my way, holding its head up. The whole lower jaw had been shot off, and hung dangling by a stringlike piece of skin. I have never in my life had an appeal for help from a brute so distinct and touching as then. Even yet I sicken at the recollection. Speaking to an orderly, I surged by the creature and escaped the crack of the pistol-shot that was the merciful answer to the mute petition.

Brown promptly wheeled his guns at the distant procession. We both knew it was reinforcements hurrying to strengthen Pond's threatened flank; and it occurred to me, when it had joined him, what if he were to turn the table and let loose at my flank? The nervous anxiety with which I watched the flags flitting across the road, each representative of a regiment, may be imagined. I watched and counted them—one—three—five—Heavens, would they never quit coming?—eight, the last one. And, thinking of my nine regiments, I drew a long breath.

To this time our battle had been so light it scarcely deserved the name. This was now to change. The opposition was piling up in my front.

Ten o'clock—ay, and thirty minutes!

Then Brown's guns ceased talking; and, coming to me,

he could not hide his chagrin while reporting his ammunition-boxes empty. I ordered him out of the fight, and to the Landing for a resupply.<sup>1</sup> Sending for Thurber, it was amazing how soon the young fellow took up the duel. Indeed, there was scarcely an intermission in the exchange of missiles.

Still no sign of the support!

Seeing a commotion on the part of the enemy in the edge of the woods, I suspected an attempt to charge Thurber in preparation.

There was a grove projecting into the field towards us from the opposite side, which, if occupied, would give me command of the ground from a certain point to the battery; and into it I sent the First Brigade, warning Colonel Smith to look out. Hardly was he in possession, when, sure enough, a column of horsemen in company front moved out of the woods into the open. I had never seen a cavalry charge in real action prior to this one; and having no apprehension for the safety of the battery, I watched the outcome with peculiar interest, almost as a disinterested spectator. The adventurers advanced loosely and, I thought, timidly. From a walk they broke into a trot, and, as I judged, were about to pass into a gallop, when suddenly they were splattered with a fire from the strip of woods at their left; it was not a volley, nevertheless the column wavered, then lost their impetus and alignment—stopped—became a

<sup>1</sup> To resupply himself, as ordered, Brown went to the Landing, where, finding it impossible to get near the ordnance-boat with his battery, he returned to the open field from which he had gone out in the morning. Then, unhitching his horses, he mounted men on them, and in that way each rider carrying a box before him on his horse, he at length secured what he wanted. By that time, however, it was too late to rejoin the division that day. The incident may help the reader to a just conception of the demoralization that prevailed at the Landing all through Monday, the second day of the battle.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

mob and turned about, each man striving to get back into the woods first, leaving the line of their flight spotted here and there with objects which might be men or horses or both. There were great laughter and cheering on our side. Thurber, in exuberance of spirit, stayed the working of his guns, while his men mounting the carriages hurraed as if crazy.

A body of Confederate infantry advanced from the woods next as if to take up the attempt of the cavalry; but, becoming a target for Thurber, and at length struck by a cross-fire from Smith, they retired, though in good order and with slight loss.

At last the support for which I waited appeared. To this day, however, I do not know who composed it or by whom it was commanded—whether by Sherman or McClernand.<sup>1</sup>

I remember being struck by its orderly and handsome appearance. It came out of the woods, a silent line of battle extending southward to the full limit of the field, and derived brilliance from its gleaming bayonets and great number of regimental colors fluttering over its ranks. The spectacle was one to excite admiration and confidence, and I lost not a moment in ordering my own division forward.

The line of advance of the support was slightly diagonal, and, to accommodate my friends, I adopted it, though still adhering to the *echelon* left in front.

Again the enemy disappointed me. Moved, doubtless, by the brave showing we offered him, he yielded the woods to us without opposition, except of skirmishers.

We were brought then into a second field larger than

<sup>1</sup> In my official report, as first sent into headquarters, I spoke of the support as Sherman's. The paper was returned to me for correction, and with information simply that *it was not Sherman's*.



the first, its surface marked by wider and deeper undulations. As my First Brigade entered it, the Confederates were passing into a woods opposite, moving in excellent order by the right of companies. In places I could see them halt in the edge of the wood and wheel into line. Nor that only. The forest on their side of the field traversed our whole front—by which I mean the front of my division and that of the supporting force on the left.

Then I saw what had become of the regiments so vigorously shelled by Lieutenant Brown. Having leisurely taken position in Pond's rear, when ready they had called him to them. I could but admire the strategy. And now, indeed, our work was become serious, face to face, regiment against regiment—we in the open, the enemy in the woods, ours to attack.

The ground by which we were to pass lay before me outspread like a map. It, too, had been a cotton-field. The soil, of stiff, red clay, had the adhesive properties of wet snow; besides being stiff and sticky, it was slippery as soap. In general conformation the surface dipped thitherward to a crooked runlet in the centre. Willow bushes, leaved in the fresh green of early spring, fringed the benched banks of the little stream, and here and there I saw a tree. I swept the ruddy terrain for advantages, and found but one—the undulations of the ground in its opposite rise. An advancing line would find degrees of protection in the hollow places, and skirmishers perfect cover. So did this last idea impress me that I hurried staff-officers to the chiefs of brigade directing them to double the skirmishers already out. A finer opportunity might never arise to try what virtue there might be attacking in open order.

From the field I turned to the division. Whittlesey had in some way lost his position in the advance—or,



rather, two of his regiments were at the moment hurrying forward to regain their places. With that exception the movement was flawless — was beautiful and inspiring.

I glanced next to the neighbors on the left. They, too, were doing well—only had the power been mine the interval between us had been diminished. In this moment, when my attention and whole soul, in fact, were absorbed, a stranger rode up behind me and asked:

“Are you General Wallace?”

I looked to him, and noticed about five hundred men standing halted in files of four and at order arms. I also noticed four or five stands of colors. What could so small a body be doing with so many colors?<sup>1</sup>

“Yes, I am General Wallace. What do you want?”

He struck his breast with a gauntleted hand, melodramatically, and replied:

“I am Colonel Dan Stuart, of Chicago. Show me where to go in.”

“To whose command do you belong, colonel?”

“General Sherman’s.”

“Then why don’t you report to him?”

“I can’t find him.”

“Well,” I said, “see those people over there on the left? They are his. He no doubt needs you, and I don’t like to interfere.”

The colonel faced about and called his five hundred to attention. “Stay a moment,” I continued. “If you don’t find General Sherman, come back to me, and I’ll see you get in.”

“I’ll do it.”

<sup>1</sup> Many of these colors represented, as I afterwards found out, mere fragments of regiments, or such of the brave as chose or could be induced to stand by their colors through another day of battle.

And with that he marched away.

Without halting, without wavering, silently and in perfect order—Whittlesey having recovered his place in the advance—the three brigades marched down the easy dip to the runlet. The crossing there occasioned a momentary delay as the regiments one by one reached it.

The first collision took place between the skirmishers. Those of the enemy, in much thinner deployment than ours, had been mere specks on the red face of the grassless slope; now they began to acknowledge and resent the pressure upon them; after which the actions of the irregular fighters were antics in appearance, and would have been amusing had not the rattle of the shooting and the thin, white puffs of pale-blue smoke told of a seriousness even to death in the lively business.

Thus the way up the slope was cleared—up, as I judged, to within seventy-five yards of the woods. There our irregulars took the ground, hugging it close.

And then, the regiments having crossed the little branch and its fringed banks, and restored their alignments almost without pausing, commenced going up the slope. That was the moment the enemy chose to break his silence. A great outburst of musketry, deepened by the hoarse voices of a battery, ran along the edge of the woods. I sat looking at the foremost regiments of the First Brigade—the old regiment, its *personnel* only a little less dear to me than its honor—and breathed easier seeing it move on and up, followed as bravely by its associates, the Twenty-fourth Indiana and the Eighth Missouri. In my heart I was saying all manner of encomiastic things, when one of my officers cried out:

“Hello! Look yonder!”

“Where?”

“To the left. Look at them!”

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

It was the *supports*—so, knowing no officer or state or number to name them by, I must continue calling them. The fire running around the edge of the woods had come to them, and they had halted or been allowed to halt. Better in such cases go on, though a few steps; in those few steps the startled soldiery has a chance to call its *morale* back.

Now their line at the moment was nearly in prolongation of mine, trending somewhat south of west, and I could see plainly to its farthest flag. A few of the brave among them were returning the fire. The many, however, offered me a curious illustration of the influence of flags upon men in battle. Each one here was a projecting forward point from which the ranks bent backward like scallops. I could see the officers trying to hold their men fast; yet the scallops deepened until it looked as if a cord reaching from the flags was all that held the files together arm and arm, allowing them to bend but not break. Then, all at once, as if some one had cut the cord, I saw a mob fleeing to the rear, carrying the colors along with it. The woods swallowed the shameful spectacle, and I was recalled to the care of my own.

To leave it to be inferred that I viewed this affair with indifference would be very misleading. I saw intuitively all the ugliness of the situation it imposed—especially the consequences to my own command, which, though under fire, was advancing with encouraging precision. The First Brigade had passed the rise to within a third of the distance to the woods, and as yet it had not replied to the enemy; but going on would now invite a rush at its left flank. I shrank from the thought of retreat—never *that* until I had to! There was but one thing else in the least promising. An aide left me, spurring to Smith with an order to halt, for he was not

a man to halt without an order. The same to Thayer and Whittlesey—each to stop where he was, as it would be less difficult using their regiments on the right or left of Smith—easier, for that matter, to make totally new dispositions according to emergencies.

And then, seeing the enemy showed no disposition to follow up their success, I took hope that my late neighbors might rally and return. If they did not, General Grant, upon a representation of my predicament, might be induced to send me assistance.

It was now high noon.

Over in the south the battle was still in progress.

I could see my skirmishers up within range of the enemy and firing, and parts of the brigades as the undulations permitted.

Half an hour passed, spent in anxious watching for the return of the support. At last, rallied and reformed, out of the woods they came, more welcome than ever.

It was my game then to push everything I had, and with all energy, against the enemy; this to help the helpers at my left, and in return for the occupation they would give the foe in their front. Within five minutes the whole division was again in motion, with orders to go into line upon the left regiment halted for the purpose—all save the reserves.

During the manœuvre white puffs in the air above the field bespoke the activity of the artillerymen opposing us; but there was no faltering on our side. In the time, also, some horsemen thought to charge the right flank of the First Nebraska. A single volley from the Twenty-third Indiana, next in the *echelon*, put an inglorious stop to the cavaliers. The leader in the dash was in his shirt-sleeves, which struck me as a travesty upon the white plume of Henry of Navarre at Ivry; and, with



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

my staff, I laughed heartily at the vigorous flapping of the sleeves in the retreat.

One by one, then, the regiments marched up into line, and, fixing bayonets, lay down.

In the mean time, the skirmishers under Lieutenant-Colonel Gerber, of the Twenty-fourth Indiana, in front of the First Brigade, had crept up near enough to open upon the horses of the battery, presumably Ketchum's. In this bold push Gerber was killed. A number of others not less brave shared his fate or were wounded. The sacrifices were not in vain, for the guns were hastily withdrawn; and then, Whittlesey's last regiment having completed the line, I ordered a general advance. Up rose all the flags, and up the men, and forward—a glorious sight I may never see again!

It was not possible to do this without hurt to somebody; and soon little groups of two and three drew out from the rear rank of this or that regiment. I saw them start slowly down the slope bearing burdens; at the same time yet other groups went up from the willows of the branch to meet those coming down, and in these I recognized surgeons and their assistants hastening to meet the wounded. It is a merciful rule of battle, the outgrowth of modern times, that only the dead must be left where they fall.

The brigades reached the level of the woods, and, passing over the skirmishers, joined their fire to that of the Confederates. I have never heard musketry such as then arose—and it lasted so—minutes and minutes—and listening to it my mouth grew fever-dry. At length I noticed a perceptible advance, meaning a gain of ground—but at what awful expense!

With my staff, then, and still on the trail of the Eleventh Indiana—for on their left lay the danger of a mishap—I crossed the little branch and was half-way

up the slope, moving rapidly when I heard a noise strangely like the cheering of children.

“What on earth can that be?” I asked, drawing rein. We all looked back.

Then Captain Ross said, “They are our drummers.”

I had set out in the three years’ service with my old regiment having boys for drummers. The bandsmen understood that in engagements they were to accompany the surgeons as assistants; but these little fellows, the oldest not more than fifteen—it had not occurred to me, or to Colonel McGinnis, to order specially for them. Having procured guns somewhere, and cartridge-belts well filled—the guns too tall for many of them and the belts a world too roomy—here they were.

“What will you have done with them?” Ross inquired.

“Let them alone,” I said. “We can’t be bothered with them now. And, besides, if they are determined on it, they will give us the slip and get in anyway.”

Next day I heard of them actually on the firing-line, and also that they came safely through.

It was well enough I declined to take on extra care; for, facing frontward and looking casually over at our friends of the support, then little more than half-way across their part of the field, I saw they were in grievous straits; that the imaginary cord binding them to their standards had been cut again, and, as before, they were seeking the woods from which they had so newly come out, reminding me of blackbirds in their migratory fall flight.

I can talk of the circumstance lightly now; but there was nothing light in it then. And when I beheld the enemy rousing from his concealment, and with triumphant yells preparing to set out in pursuit, I trembled for my division. If, when started, he should stop and

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

left wheel, alas for its flank. Indeed, there was sudden strain on my best wits, with result that an aide went at top speed to bring Smith to a halt, while another rode as for dear life to fetch Woods's Seventy-sixth Ohio up out of the reserve. The regiment came on the run, and, almost before the Confederates, beginning to issue from the woods, could look my way, it was lying down in a line at right angles with the First Brigade, then fighting at a halt.

Nor was that all. In awful dread of having to call the division back, I sent Thurber across the branch to find a position convenient for covering a retreat.

And now the enemy started forward, yelping. I looked at them, then at the woods behind us in which by that time my supporting force had been lost. Nothing more was to be expected from that force—and, in fact, I saw nothing more of it. Then—at the last moment, it seemed—from a corner of the field in the south a body not before observed began to file out of the forest. Who was it? Friend or foe?

Shortly the strangers gave me sight of their flag, at which my pulse gave a great jump; for through the glass I could see the stars in the dark-blue union, with the familiar colors of the morning about them.

The Confederates swept down until past Woods and his Seventy-sixth, their left flank in easy range. That was my time, and I should have had the Ohioans on their feet and firing. Few men, however, can always think to do or say the right thing at the right moment; and I confess to having forgotten everything else, so intent was I watching the up-coming of the strangers.

They were but a regiment; yet at sight of them the enemy halted, about-faced, and returned to his position in the woods. There he struck out with a fire so lively that the new-comers halted and showed signs of distress.

Then an officer rode swiftly round their left flank and stopped when in front of them, his back to the enemy. What he said I could not hear, but from the motions of the men he was putting them through the manual of arms—this notwithstanding some of them were dropping in the ranks. Taken all in all, *that* I think was the most audacious thing that came under my observation during the war. The effect was magical. The colonel returned to his post in the rear, and the regiment, steadied as if on parade, advanced in face of the fire pouring upon them and actually entered the wood.

On my part, then, no time was lost pressing the division forward; and while the order was in delivery I despatched an orderly to the colonel of the unknown regiment with my compliments, and asking his name. "August Willich, of the Thirty-second Indiana Volunteers," was the reply brought me.

"Willich—August Willich?" I repeated, it being impossible for me to recall him as of the Army of the Tennessee. Again the orderly went to Willich, asking him this time to be good enough to give me the division to which he belonged. He answered, "McCook's division of the Army of the Ohio, Major-General Don Carlos Buell commanding."

"The Army of the Ohio!" I exclaimed, in irrepressible astonishment. And I thought swiftly: "How long has it been on the ground? Was the fighting heard in the south theirs? Why was not word of their arrival given me?" Smothering my wonder, I hastened to make the most of the news. To each chief of brigade I had it reported that the whole Army of the Ohio was in the battle, forty thousand strong, and the victory assured; that the fact must be got to their men, with an appeal not to allow themselves to be outdone now; that there



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

would be great glory in whipping the Confederates, and we must have our share in it.

I do not know to how many the information got or in what words; I did notice, however, a freshening of the firing. The remnant of a Michigan regiment had come to me from General McClernand. Leaving it with Willich, I returned Woods to his place in the reserve behind the Third Brigade and sent for Thurber and his battery.

As I recollect, it was then one o'clock and some minutes.

On our side, as I thought it out, the plan of battle was to relieve so much of the Army of the Tennessee as had been engaged the day before and throw the stress of the fighting upon the Army of the Ohio and my command. Willich had no doubt been sent me by General McCook, then next on my left. In short, I could no longer see a reason for not allowing the division to go forward with all its might. Accordingly, an order to force the fighting was sent to each brigade commander.

At first the progress was slow; even inch by inch I passed into the woods behind the Second Brigade. They were thick and dark, and darker for the smoke that caught in the foliage and hung there—so dark that neither side could see the other. And seriously to hinder the advance there were patches of underbrush so thick men had to push themselves through by main strength, making it impossible to observe their alignment. At places we had difficulty in forcing our horses forward. Not a little of the fighting, consequently, was purely Indian in fashion—here behind trees and logs, there hand to hand. What with shooting and yelling, the noise was deafening. Men loaded and fired without aim—or rather at the sounds coming from what

they thought their front. Single combats were frequent. In the obscurity about them, individuals came upon one another face to face unexpectedly, and fell to with clubbed guns, having no time to fix bayonets. Of necessity the wounded and the dead were alike left where they fell. In going through the thickets, those of us on horses had to be careful not to ride upon unfortunates.

One would think that being a soldier would not change nature; that lying upon the ground hurt and bleeding, possibly *in extremis*, a man's thought and speech would take something from his condition. Not so. The passion of combat does not cool instantaneously; very frequently it is the actuation in death. Coming upon the wounded, I would stop and speak to them, for my sympathy was real and without regard for uniform. "Where are you hurt? What can we do for you?"

I cannot recall a single case of whimpering or complaining, or of prayer. The answers of my own men were mostly of this sort:

"Heigh, cap! They're on the run, ain't they?"

"Yes."

"Well, give 'em hell."

Sometimes the reply would be:

"Never mind me, general. 'Tend to business. Whoop 'em up!"

Sentiment for the moment was out, and of solemnity there was not a trace. They were characteristics reserved for the hospital.

Of the three lines of action, allowing one for each brigade, Whittlesey's proved the least difficult. The Twentieth Ohio, Colonel M. L. Force, and the Seventy-eighth Ohio, Colonel M. D. Leggett, comprised his firing-line, with which it was plain fighting, though over broken ground. Ketchum's battery gave them their greatest

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

annoyance, and I had finally to send Thurber to settle it. Of the Seventy-sixth Ohio, Colonel Charles R. Woods, Whittlesey's reserve regiment, I made free use as occasion required. In the woods in front of Thayer the resistance was determined and bloody. He had set out with the Fifty-eighth Ohio, Colonel Bausenwein, in reserve, but called it into the general line early; the other regiments being the First Nebraska, Colonel W. D. McCord, and the Twenty-third Indiana, Colonel W. C. Sanderson.

In the heat of the struggle in the woods, the First Nebraska and the Fifty-eighth Ohio exhausted their ammunition, and were compelled to retire for a resupply. I ordered the Seventy-sixth Ohio into their places; and so promptly did Woods come up that there was no observable cessation of the fire. Upon their return I transferred him to the support of Colonel Willich, on the extreme left.

The First Brigade, Colonel Morgan L. Smith, was composed of the Twenty-fourth Indiana, Colonel Alvin P. Hovey; the Eleventh Indiana, Colonel George McGinnis; and the Eighth Missouri, Lieutenant-Colonel James Peckham, the latter in reserve.

It was in front of this brigade the severest fighting occurred. While pressing Colonel McGinnis by direct attack, the enemy suddenly assailed him in flank. With great presence of mind his lieutenant-colonel, Isaac C. Elston, wheeled the left wing of the regiment backward and maintained the struggle without retirement of the colors until Colonel Willich succeeded in making the connection and shaking the assailants off.

Two o'clock came, then three o'clock—and in all that time the woods smoked and flamed without intermission; and, listening to the sounds, it did not seem possible that a man could come out of the infernal con-

tact alive to tell of it. At last, however, I could discern a relenting of the fury; at the same time a quickening of the advance on our side told me of a giving-way by the Confederates. A little later their yell ceased, the firing grew sporadic, and my whole line strode forward, cheering for the first time.

Meanwhile, Whittlesey, by gradually advancing his regiments, had been inadvertently giving direction to the division; insomuch that, at the moment the Confederates quickened their retirement, it was swinging ahead its front several degrees south of west. In its course it soon crossed a beaten road, which I have since thought must have been the thoroughfare from Pittsburg Landing to Purdy. There, while I was taking breath in the road, General Grant came to me attended simply as in the morning. Much I doubt if anything of the kind could have been more laconic than the interview that then took place between us. There was no salutation in words; but on his part, instead, the remark:

“You are getting along very well; but you have swung round too far to the left, and are likely to get in the way of the general advance. To avoid that make a half-wheel to the right here, and then move on.”<sup>1</sup>

With that he turned and trotted hastily back the way he came.

In this visit General Grant's manner made a deep impression upon me; and as he rode away I could not help thinking that when he had come to me in the morning, though he had lost a battle, no one could have been quieter than he; now, though the winner of a battle,

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to this change of direction in my official report, I notice the inference is left that it was upon my own judgment. This was an unintentional mistake, for which I beg pardon of the shade of my great superior.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

he was as quiet as in the morning. The truth is, I had not acquaintance with him enough to know that this imperturbability under all circumstances was one of his many remarkable characteristics.

Then I observed cheering as distinct from the Confederate yell, and that it was at my left rear; whereupon I construed General Grant's present order as meaning that my division was leading in the battle. The reader may take it for granted that the intelligence was not in the least discomfiting.

The half-swing to the right was promptly made, giving me a bearing slightly north of west. The manœuvre accomplished, I had the skirmishers pushed forward again in double strength, and directly they struck the Confederate skirmishers, who sullenly gave back.

From the road in which General Grant came to me the ground in places was cumbered with the aftermath of a great battle, conspicuously dead men and horses; and of the men, to appearances there were as many in butternut as in blue. I had time barely to notice that once or twice we came to places where the evidences of the fight were more profusely strewn over the ground; these I took to be positions our people had taken up in their retreat.

It was now after four o'clock.

By-and-by we came to a camp.<sup>1</sup> The tents were standing, but their contents lay in heaps out in the streets. Every one of them had been plundered. Whose the camp was I did not know, and I saw no one of whom to

<sup>1</sup> Within our lines there was a drinking-tent, on which was written "Paradise." It was taken by the Confederates in the first day's fight, and the victors wrote beneath its name, "Lost." By Beauregard's order all camp furniture was left intact, as he expected to possess the whole field in the morrow's struggle. The Union army recovered their ground by the second day's battle; the pleasure tent was retaken, and to the two names was added the word "Regained."

ask. It was entirely deserted. I heard of dead men in the tents, but saw none.

Through the streets the Confederate skirmishers were pushed without stop. The shadows were lengthening and day fading out in the sky when I rode through the camp after the Second Brigade. The firing had almost ceased over on the left, and of the battle an occasional crackle in my front was the principal reminder. Then I knew my division was leading the army.

We swept down a slope beyond the camp to a boggy brook.<sup>1</sup> Strewn over the surface of the slope clear down to the brook there were dead men, among whom my horse picked his way with reluctance. A sickly smell tainted the air; whether it rose from the bodies or the bloody sod, or was a sulphurous residuum of battle-smoke, I could not tell. In my haste to get rid of it, I plunged inadvertently into a swamp that tried all John's great strength.

Up a hill west of the brook we clambered, and found ourselves in a parklike forest, level and unobstructed. Night was falling. Even the belated skirmishers of the enemy had disappeared, and I knew the battle was over—at least for the night. Still, we slowly felt our way forward. When, at last, I ordered a halt, it was nearly night.<sup>2</sup>

What next?

My men needed rest, shelter, and a warm meal, and I thought of the empty tents of the camp behind us; yet to-morrow there would be pursuit—that of course—and, as I was farthest out, why should not the duty be intrusted to me? Besides that, I was unwilling to retire a step without an order. In the end I sent an officer with a report to General Grant. To

<sup>1</sup> Shiloh Run.

<sup>2</sup> A tablet now marks the place of the halt.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

my great disappointment the officer returned with a direction for me to retire the division to the line the army had occupied Sunday morning.

About midnight a man aroused me from sleep. There was an angry dispute going on about the tents, he said. Our men were in possession, but some others had come up and claimed them. He wanted to know what should be done.

"Who are the claimants?" I asked.

"They say they are of Sherman's division."

"And this is Sherman's camp?"

"They say so."

"Very well, let them have it." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Touching Sherman's report, it will be observed that he does not claim to have recaptured his camps.

## LVIII

No pursuit—Arrival of General Halleck—The meeting—At Shiloh Run—The book on tactics—Beauregard—General Grant after Shiloh—Halleck commander-in-chief—The visit of Halleck's orderlies—The criticism.

THE pursuit anticipated was not undertaken; exactly why I did not know. Since coming to a better understanding of the situation, however, it has been my surmise that after the battle General Grant was as much under General Halleck's order not to do anything as before it.

On April 11th, or thereabouts, a report spread through both armies that General Halleck had arrived. I waited a few days for the great man to settle in headquarters; then I summoned courage to call upon him. I found him in the midst of staff-officers, clerks, and orderlies. Everything appurtenant—tents, furniture, men, and horses—looked enviably fresh and new.

I took him to be several degrees on the western side of the meridian of life. He asked no questions of me, but indulged in very positive speech of the great things he would now give me to see. Indeed, what he said would in any other person have been boastful; but I excused him. The Army of the Tennessee, to which he knew I belonged, had been somewhat unfortunate, and doubtless he thought I needed reinspiring.

There were two points in his manner which insisted upon notice—a sideways carriage of the head and a habit of looking at people with eyes wide open, staring,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

dull, fishy even, more than owlish. The effect was of talking to somebody over my shoulder.

Having by permission selected a place for encampment beyond Shiloh Run, I had the entire properties of the division brought from Crump's; after which I waited developments, knowing to what the new general was bound to address himself first thing—that is, the taking of Corinth.

Meanwhile, as will presently be seen, having plenty of occupation in my camp, I went about but little. One day news was brought me of the joinder of the Army of the Mississippi, General John Pope commanding. It was said to be thirty thousand strong, and of prestige, the conquest of Island No. 10, a Confederate stronghold in the Mississippi River, being to its credit. I began then to see a basis for General Halleck's oracular utterances.

Drilling the division and the routine work incident to taking care of it took up the day. As to the nights, I fell into the old habit of making them my own and doing the work most agreeable to me.

It was in that camp I began the composition of a book of tactics. I had seen a repeating rifle—afterwards known as the Henry Repeating Rifle—and it set my imagination going. I jumped to the conclusion that the government would make haste to supply the whole national army with it, and then farewell to Scott, Casey, and Hardee, and their rank behind rank and elbow to elbow—then, of imperious necessity, the opposite principle of open order.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the system of tactics here spoken of I made bold to replace the company unit of four by a three. Working out the description of a manœuvre, as it were, to-night, in the morning I would have a company of the old regiment (the Eleventh Indiana) brought to my tent door—this to test the correctness of the description and

The book was a diversion, of course, but it was not the only one. I mixed the work with devising problems *apropos* the taking of Corinth and what to do after the taking.

In these endeavors the point was to see how nearly I could limn out in advance the plan of operations General Halleck would put into practice; for, admitting him a most exalted master of strategy—a thing I was perfectly willing to do, having then nothing to the contrary to go upon—I was sure to have a measure of the merits of my own invention.

The drawback to my efforts, as I soon discovered, the mechanical accuracy of the movement. In the latter particular the results were wonderful.

A second improvement provided a corporal as one of every doubled three, over which he was to have special charge in action. All commands being by bugle, though he might engage in firing, it was the corporal's duty to listen for the calls and see to their instant execution. By such means I conceived it possible to minimize the difficulty (in the old system, the impossibility) of controlling a command extended miles out over hills, down hollows, or in the densest wood.

I put the last touches upon the book (which had grown to several hundred pages) shortly after the close of the war, and submitted it, under the title of *Light Infantry Tactics*, to Secretary Stanton for formal adoption. He ordered a board to consider it and report. The adjutant-general selected for the duty a colonel of artillery, a colonel of engineers, and a second lieutenant just out of the Academy. Neither of the senior members had drilled a company of infantry since his graduation, forty or fifty years before. One night during the session there came a knock at my door—I was in Washington at the time—and the lieutenant entered. He came, he said, to tell me privately that his associates of the board had agreed not to report upon the book, but suggest a postponement of its consideration. "The descriptions are plain, the manœuvres simple, and the illustrative diagrams perfect; yet," he said, "they cannot comprehend them, and won't listen to me. I'm too much of a boy." And, instead of a report for or against, they did move a postponement.

I have the MS. yet; and sometimes, when a young military friend comes to see me, I take it out to show him. At such times it serves me to base an argument upon it as an antidote for idleness and *ennui*.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

was ignorance of the topography in the vicinity of Corinth; but, presuming a sensible people would not be at labor and expense building roads through impassable districts, I at last finished a scheme which I confessed to myself the best I could devise.

I am not at all confident that the scheme thus worked out will interest the civilian reader; with soldiers, however, it may be different, and they, too, have rights—among them that of being amused. So I will venture upon giving it generalized.

Beauregard, I said, has not to exceed fifty thousand men, while Halleck has one hundred and twenty thousand, organized into three armies.

Pittsburg Landing is Halleck's base, Corinth his objective, with only twenty miles between. Now—

Halleck will give himself one week in which to fortify the Landing; in the same week he will fill the country clear to Beauregard's outer works with scouts, and from them and loyal citizens acquainted with the region of operation he will get all the topography he can need.

Advancing then, Halleck will use the Army of the Tennessee to guard his communications; after which there will be left him Buell's Army of the Ohio and Pope's Army of the Mississippi, a left hand and a right with which to strike.

It took General Albert Sidney Johnston three days to get within striking distance of the Army of the Tennessee in front of Pittsburg Landing. General Halleck, having more leisure on his hands, will allow himself five days in which to get to Corinth, *and take it*—ample time.

Rations being cooked and in haversack, Halleck will have no *impedimenta* except ordnance in wagons, and when he sets out it will be with an order of combined movement so arranged and timed that if battle is offered him anywhere this side of Corinth he can accept it.

Having reached the distance convenient for the *coup de main*, on which side of Corinth will Halleck reach out? And I said on the south side certainly, for there lie Beauregard's communications and his line of retreat.

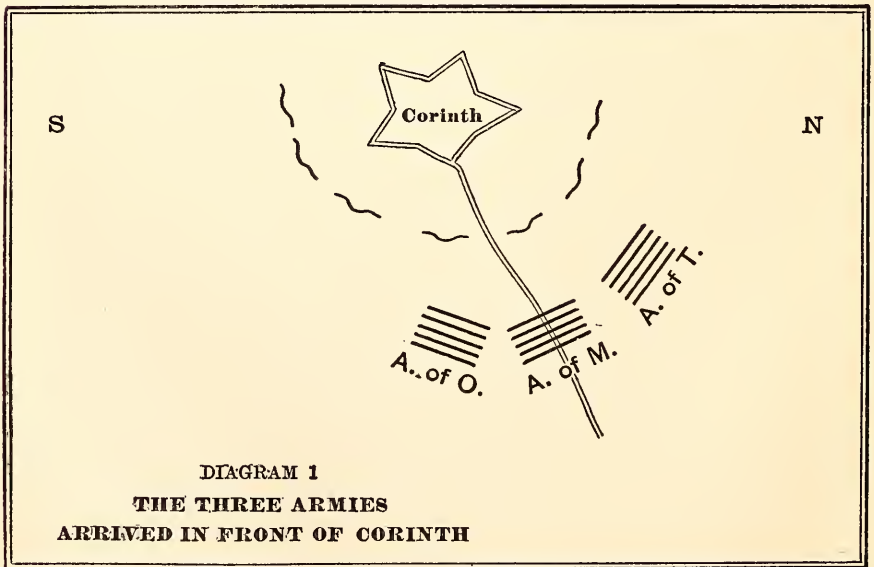
The country north of Corinth Halleck will leave open, knowing Beauregard dare not attempt escape in that direction.

Of the getting into position, I drew diagrams 1 and 2.

The reduction of Corinth, the town, would be a most barren conclusion; to make the operation a success at all in rivalry with Grant's achievement at Donelson, Halleck must take Beauregard, and Beauregard's army, or a great part of it, and all the stores there.

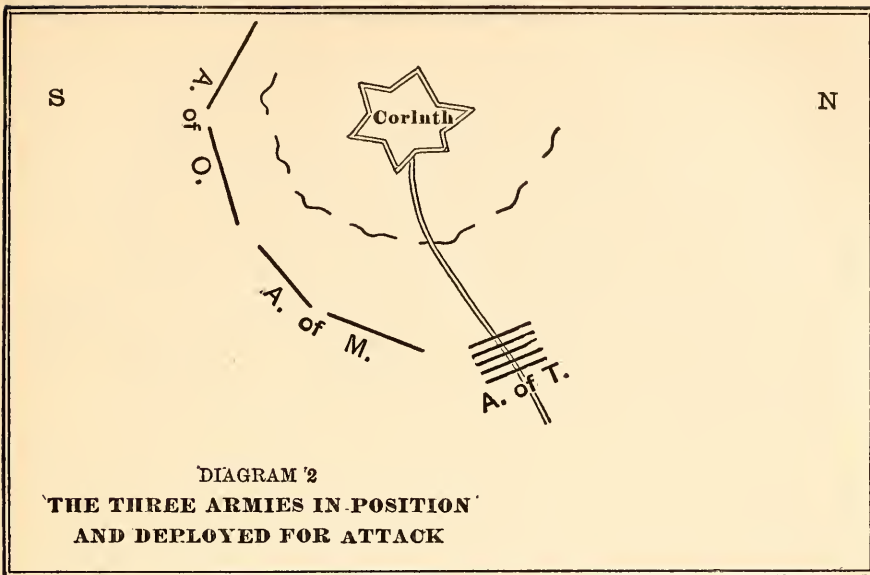
Thus I amused myself trying to anticipate the new commander. We will presently see how nearly I succeeded.

After a lapse which, as I now remember it, was considerably beyond the week I had given General Halleck for preparation, an order appeared having a look of





## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY



getting ready to move. To the surprise of many, command of the Army of the Tennessee was taken from General Grant and given to General Thomas, transferred for the purpose from the Army of the Ohio. It also created a reserve composed of General McClelland's division and mine.

Somebody had to be in the reserve; nor could I say that selection for the duty argued any lack of confidence in those selected; yet I knew at once that the operation against Corinth would be barren of honor so far as I was concerned—that General McClelland was likely to smother me. But, I thought, if my disposal was unpleasant, how about General Grant? He was not merely deposed, but actually left without command of any kind. He had been greatly successful—the Cause was his debtor—and I could not forget that to him I owed my last promotion.

My feeling on the subject was heightened by a circumstance. Passing to my camp one day, I saw a tent out by itself. A man stood in the door. His seemed a

familiar figure, and, looking a second time, I recognized General Grant, and rode to him. Bringing a campstool, he invited me to sit. The conversation was chiefly remarkable in that he made no allusion to his treatment by General Halleck—neither by voice, look, nor manner did he betray any resentment. That very silence on his part touched me the more keenly.

The week I had given General Halleck for preparation spent itself without movement. A second week, and still no awakening—and much I wondered.

Towards the latter part of the month, as I now recollect, an order was put in my hand which had much significance. It was from General McClernand, my immediate chief, in substance directing me to follow the general movement and take position on the main road midway between Corinth and Pittsburg Landing, where my duty would be twofold—to assist in guarding the right of the army during its forward operations and keep the road from the Landing to the front free of incursions by the enemy. Upon suggesting that I had no cavalry with which to patrol the country, I was relieved from the first service.

Then, shortly, I was notified to move a mile beyond General Sherman in my front, halt the division, and throw up breastworks.

Then, as I recall it, McClernand came, and, advancing a mile beyond me, halted and threw up breastworks.

Then somebody else passed McClernand a mile and halted, and threw up breastworks. And so it continued a mile a day until Pea Ridge was taken within our lines. There I halted and went into camp—a very beautiful and convenient site from which to perform the part assigned me in the historical siege of Corinth.

By that time General Halleck's plan of operations underwent complete development; after which, with lit-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

tle else to do, I measured my scheme by his, and was amazed to find myself out in every particular.<sup>1</sup> His plan I figured out:

With one hundred and twenty thousand men he was moving against fifty thousand,<sup>2</sup> whose recent defeats more than neutralized their advantage of fortifications.

He was moving at the rate of a mile a day, throwing up works at every halt. That is, he gained a mile every day to go into besiegement every night. At the end he would have spent a month doing what General Johnston had done in three days.

Beginning his approaches twenty miles from the town, and confining them entirely to one side, he left the enemy free to choose which of the other three sides it would be best to retire by when the time came, and what all to take away with him.

Finally he placed his armies, all three, under a peremptory order not to bring on an engagement. "It is better," he instructed them, "to retreat than to fight."

The disgust excited, when these points became public, was very general, and much freedom was used in expressing it. I managed for the most part to be silent—important at all times, but never more so, as I well knew, than in the army.

One day, however, I opened my mouth and let my opinions fly; this, too, under circumstances so discreditable to my good sense that I hesitate writing them. In fact, I would not do so were the exposure less essential to a just explanation of the evil time soon to overtake me. I make no apology for my foolishness,

<sup>1</sup> When, in his *Memoirs*, General Grant speaks of General Halleck's movement against Corinth, calling it a siege from the start to the close, it is difficult deciding whether the writer was serious or ironic.

<sup>2</sup> General Beauregard's force soon dwindled to about twenty-five thousand.

except the very general one that it is not in nature for any man to be always good and always wise.

My camp, it should be remembered, was supposed to be about half-way from Pittsburg Landing to the constantly shifting front. Off the road on the north side some fifty yards were my headquarters, the tents looking whiter, cooler, and more inviting to passers-by because of the shade thrown over them from a number of large oak-trees. Men in uniform and men in plain clothes, going to and fro, very soon commenced making it convenient to stop with me about noon; and I, being hospitably inclined, took to inviting them to share my luncheon, which, in a short time, thanks to an excellent field-cook, grew exceptionally popular; insomuch that, as the siege progressed, the fire in my kitchen rarely went out in the daytime.

Once a passenger from the front stopped and told me about General Pope's battle of Farmington, of occurrence the day before. The person was a good storyteller, and fed me some points that set the gorge rising within me. One treated of a suspicion, of rapid spread, that Beauregard was leisurely evacuating Corinth. According to another, Pope's object in fighting was to see how much truth there might be in the suspicion. "He was doing the Johnnies up in fine style"—so the narrative proceeded—"he had them on the run—in a few minutes his men would have gone over the outworks, when up rode an officer from General Halleck with an order of the iron-crusted kind to stop and go back. And Pope drew his men off, leaving Beauregard much obliged to him."

Now, speaking narrowly, it was none of my business what Beauregard did so he let the road in my trust alone, yet I resented the interference with Pope; and every little while the report of a gun at the front would roll



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sullenly over my peaceful camp, keeping the irrational irritation alive.

There had been about time enough after lunch for the coffee to cool in the kitchen, when three officers rode to the door, dismounted, gave the reins to an orderly, and came in. In school-girl parlance they were nice young gentlemen. Their uniforms, though spotted with a few splashes of mud, had the freshness of the tailor-shop; their buttons sparkled; their sword-hilts shone with gold-wash as yet unoxidized; their shoulder-knots, clean-shaven chins, natty waists, and irreproachable "set-up" were impressively suggestive of the Academy.

Though strangers, I received them kindly; and, suspecting the honor of their call was on account of the good appetite usually picked up in a ride from the Landing, I asked them to try my biscuit and coffee.

They ate heartily, and tipped the cook till he smiled from ear to ear; then they returned to me, and I tempted them with some good rye whiskey from a cut-glass decanter, and cigars of the brand Grant loved best. Unfortunately for me, one of them, while lighting up, asked me how the siege was progressing.

The question, though natural as could be, was like a spark on loose powder in a magazine. I went off in a flash.

It is not necessary, I imagine, to give so much as an outline of what I said. In the pages foregoing there is certainly enough to indicate what it would be. To ridicule General Halleck's plan of operations was to ridicule the man himself; and that was what I did. When under headway I saw the folly, and tried to stop. In vain—I had become a loaded car with broken brakes rushing on a down-grade.

My guests heard me through in polite silence, but

with astonishment thinly veiled. When at last I finished, they arose, thanked me, took each another cigar, and shook my hand with cordial pressure. I saw them out of the door and into their saddles. I saw them ride away; and, as they were going, suddenly, "Good Heavens," I said, through my gnashing teeth, "those fellows are of Halleck's staff, just from St. Louis! They will go straight and tell him all I have told them!"

The consequences rose before me in an electric glare. I had made an enemy, and he was in high place and going higher.

My only hope was that the visitors might not be Halleck's. With a ray of wit, the only one that came to me, I called to the orderly on duty.

"Simpson," I said, "you see the three men going up the hill yonder?"

"Yes, sir."

"Get your horse and go after them. Don't let them see you are shadowing them; but keep on till they stop. Then come back and tell me with whom they stop. You understand?"

He touched his cap. "Yes, sir."

Presently I heard the feet of a galloping horse.

Simpson returned in the night and reported: "I followed the men as you directed until they stopped at headquarters. An orderly led their horses off, and I saw them go into General Halleck's marquee. Leaving my horse out of sight, I asked the sentinel at the door who the new-comers were. He didn't know their names, but they were members of the general's staff from St. Louis."

The mischief was done! And yet—the thought gave me hope—the man might be great enough not to take offence at my folly, or I might be too small to arrest his attention. Anyhow, look out!

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### LIX

The evacuation of Corinth—The removal of all stores—The camp at Raleigh—The destruction of the Memphis & Ohio Railroad—The appearance of contrabands—A motley following—Colonel Slack—Richardson and Knox edit the Memphis *Avalanche*—The stay in Memphis—A pleasant sequel.

CORINTH was not captured; it was abandoned to us. At dawn of May 30th we marched into its deserted works, getting nothing—nothing—not a sick prisoner, not a rusty bayonet, not a bite of bacon—nothing but an empty town and some Quaker guns. The strategic advantages remained to us, because, with all his leisure, it was not possible for General Beauregard to destroy or take them away.

The outcome as respects the commanders was singularly in contrast. I will state it, for among my readers there may be a philosopher skilful in wringing the moral out of every incident.

President Davis, in a gust of passion, relieved Beauregard, giving his command to General Bragg, and no officer of prominence on either side of the war went down with less of sympathy. He was a military engineer merely; and what shall be said in extenuation of the moral nature of a man who in the beginning of a great civil war, countrymen against countrymen, brother against brother, could advocate raising the black flag to prevent recruiting in the North?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lossing's *Civil War in America*, vol. ii., p. 29, foot-note.

Under date of June 4th, General Halleck telegraphed Secretary Stanton:

"General Pope, with 40,000 [men], is thirty miles south of Corinth, pushing the enemy hard. He already reports 10,000 prisoners and deserters from the enemy, and 15,000 stands of arms captured.<sup>1</sup> Thousands of the enemy are throwing away their arms. . . . The result is all I could possibly desire."

Very glowing periods truly, but with not a word of truth in them; nevertheless, his cold bosom unwontedly thrilled, Secretary Stanton summoned General Halleck to Washington and installed him commander of the armies of the Union.

In the interval between the evacuation of Corinth and the summons to Washington, General Halleck settled down in the Symmington house, in the suburbs of the town, and, not knowing what better to do, busied himself in hastily dissipating his magnificent army, sending detachments of it here and there, apparently without object.

My division was among the first to be sent away, and I imagined punishment discernible in the order. Just two days after he had the town in hand, General Halleck, through General McClelland, ordered me to march by way of Purdy in the direction of Bolivar, where I was to secure the railroad bridge across the Hutchie River.

It was proposed that my command should live off the

<sup>1</sup> In 1865, the war being over, General Pope resented the liberty taken with him by General Halleck. In correspondence with that officer he denied sending up any such report, and demanded its production. The demand was evaded.—*War Records*, series 1, vol. x., part ii., pp. 635, 636. In corroboration of General Pope, General Beauregard broadly averred in a published statement that General Halleck's telegram contained as many lies as lines.—*Ibid.*, p. 671.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

country. But knowing what that meant to discipline, and the misery foraging always brings to the innocent and helpless, I thought better of the policy. My commissary — there were few better than Major Pope — quietly loaded a wagon-train for me with rations enough to serve in a slow march to the sea.

At Bolivar, which we reached without incident, a second order overtook me by virtue of which the column continued on through Somerville to Raleigh, a station ten miles out of the city of Memphis. At Raleigh I was to go into camp indefinitely and take care of the Memphis & Ohio Railroad.

If, in this march, General Halleck really intended anything punitive, he was much mistaken. June in West Tennessee, which I was to traverse, is a hot month, and now the disagreeability was increased by a drought that scorched the land and spoiled the water in the streams. I preferred the limpid fluid in the cool wells of the land-owners along the wayside, and kept an officer ahead of the advance-guard to notify them of the army coming, with request that tubs and barrels be at the gates already filled at the time the march-by took place. This proved an excellent test of the partialities of the inhabitants. The women were especially demonstrative, whether they were for or against us. Occasionally the notice met with quick and peremptory refusals. These, however, were as quickly silenced by a gentle suggestion of what happened to Egypt in the days of the locusts—only locusts bent on ruin were not to be compared to thirsty Yankees.

As we got on down in the country the colored people were sights to see. They brought the water and filled the barrels. Yankees had no terror for them. Such grinning, such ejaculations, such God-speeds in rich old plantation vernacular the regiments were unused to,

and they received them with jokes, and cheers, and such hearty good-will that the sullen gentry on the verandas ought to have been ashamed of their prejudices.

By-and-by the demonstrations ceased having anything of comedy in them; they became serious and inconvenient. Multiplying into droves, the "friend and brother" followed the column, and all through the night kept the pickets and corporals of the guard busy. The road we travelled was to him a gold-paved highway to freedom. With a word I could have had at my heels an army the most pied, trusting, and helpless ever seen. Never before, never since, have I had such an opportunity to become a Moses.

Of course, all this was not a little because we were the first of the Union army seen in that part of the country; that very circumstance called for a degree of caution which in an ordinary situation had been absurd. Having no cavalry, we kept closed up with the rigidity of battle order. Flankers dived into the woods on the way. We bivouacked in expectation of alarm, and my camps were always as compact and formal as if Forrest or Morgan was just over the hill yonder. Guard duty was the perfection of the art. I did not intend, whatever else happened, to be surprised.

At last we came to Raleigh. A lover of the rural would have been charmed with the place. It was merely a townless railway station adjoining a beautiful plantation, sunny as sun, spring-time, and green meadows could make it. A weary soldier could not have been led to a retirement more restful, and I wondered if General Halleck was thinking of a sanitarium when he sent me thither.

I lost no time in posting myself with respect to the railway of which, as I fancied, it was the intention to make me general superintendent. Two companies,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sent out on the line, returned with report that the bridges were destroyed, the culverts blown up, rails, cross-ties, and switches gone—in short, that there was nothing of a railroad left except the bed. This the people in the neighborhood of the station confirmed. The Confederates, they said, had run the sundries south, rolling stock included; and thereupon I needed nothing more to know my occupation gone. Having a suspicion then that I might not again be thought of at headquarters—at least for some time—I established a complete system of outposts, and directed that the division be made as comfortable as possible.

The fates, however, ordered otherwise. Early in the morning of the third day of duty at Raleigh, a courier from Memphis, fast travelling, drew rein at my tent door. The official document he delivered into my hand proved to be from Colonel Slack, an old Indiana acquaintance.

For better understanding, it should be said that in a battle of tin-clad gunboats and rams, fought by Colonel Ellet, the Confederates, under Commodore Montgomery, had been badly whipped, leaving Memphis at our mercy. So, the morning in question, Colonel Slack was in charge of the city with but two regiments of infantry.

The envelope was overwritten "Gallop," a direction to the courier indicative of seriousness; and when the heart of the document was reached I stood informed that General Forrest was out a few miles, with five or six thousand cavalry and some artillery, proposing a raid. In view of the need of help, Colonel Slack hoped my orders would allow me to move the division in before night.

Staying only to call in my out-lines and pickets, I put the division on the road, and by mid-afternoon paid my respects to Colonel Slack, and with him posted



the brigades and arranged generally to give Colonel Forrest a warm reception. Doubtless the wary rough-rider had word of the reinforcements in the city, for he did not disturb us. But next day General Halleck, still at Corinth, telegraphed me peremptorily, wanting to know what I was doing in Memphis. I returned answer, giving him verbatim a copy of Colonel Slack's note, and it must have been satisfactory, as I heard nothing more upon the subject.

Command of the city fell to me by virtue of rank. It proved singularly free of trouble and barren of incident, due doubtless to the constrained absence of the fire-eating element. Indeed, I now recall but two incidents worth the mention.

One was the applause extorted from the secession ladies on the balconies of the river-front of the old Gayosa House by a dress-parade of the Eleventh Indiana. The circumstance may appear trivial now, but it made Colonel McGinnis and me very happy, and was certainly productive of good. The ceremony gained popularity, and spectators who came to sneer at the Yankee soldier departed in serious mood. They saw how Donelson had been won and Shiloh saved, and through the mist of their prejudices they might have discerned a prophecy in the excellence of the performance.

An officer of the provost-guard reported a movement afoot to attack and destroy the office of a city newspaper—if I recollect rightly, the *Avalanche*. He gave me a copy of the paper of issue that morning, and I read an editorial scurrilously abusive of President Lincoln. Here was ample excuse for a large riot, but I could not afford to have it, and asked the officer to see the leaders, whoever they were, and tell them to keep quiet; that I would take the affair in hand.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Only the evening before I had entertained two men of national renown as correspondents—Knox, of the *New York Tribune*, and Richardson, of the *New York Herald*. I sent for them, with request that they come promptly; and when they were come I told them of the insolence of the *Avalanche*, and asked if they would edit the paper a few days, the hotter the better. They agreed to have the leaders ready by midnight.

Then, sending for the proprietor, who proved to be the editor also, I told him of my intention to take possession of his office and press. He protested, of course, and demanded why. I explained, and, to satisfy him that I meant no petty punishment, said: "The editorial department is all I want. The general management, including the financial, shall remain with you."

"It will ruin me!" he exclaimed, almost beside himself.

"No," I replied, "it will make you rich."

"But my patrons—my patrons—what will they say?"

He calmed down, asking if I had his successors selected.

"Yes."

"Who are they?"

I gave him their names.

"When do you want the office?"

"I will send an officer to take possession right away."

Next morning—Heavens, what an eruption! The town read the paper and shook with the laughter of the soldiers and their friends, while the air above it was blue with articulated wrath of the enemy. I leave the amazement of the patrons here and there in the country south to be imagined. Knox and Richardson soon sought other fields; the successor they left behind them was of their kind, however, and they turned their sonorous bugles over to him.

## LEW WALLACE

The conclusion of the affair came after the war was over, and may as well be given now. While at the old St. Nicholas Hotel, in New York, five cards were brought up to me. Shuffling them, I found one with a name underwritten—"Memphis *Avalanche*."

I said, "He's come for satisfaction."

Sooner over the better is my motto in all such cases. I asked the party up. In front of them, upon opening the door, were two servants, who, instead of pistols, came in bearing cigars and champagne. Introductions followed, and then explanations. He of the *Avalanche* was orator. I may not give his speech in full. In substance it was a reversion to the ouster in Memphis, with his everlasting thanks. It had made him a fortune.

Returning to my narrative, in the latter part of June General Grant appeared in Memphis, flying, as I supposed, from the snubbing of General Halleck. As he established his headquarters in the city, I was superseded in command.

It will be remembered, perhaps, that upon entering the service I had left a lucrative partnership in the law. Twelve months had passed, and Mr. Wilson was clamoring for a settlement of the business. Seeing no indication of a movement by General Halleck, it seemed a fair opportunity to go home, and I obtained a furlough for two weeks.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### LX

Relieved from command—Two months at home—Ordered to Kentucky by Morton—Colonel of the Sixty-sixth Indiana—Henry W. Wadsworth—Buell at Nashville—The advance of Kirby Smith—Garrett Davis.

EVERY life has its ups and downs. There is a difference, however; some, once down, stay down. Now suddenly somebody in the dark gave me a push, and I fell, and fell so far that I could almost see bottom. Who did it? It took me a long time to find out. My task at present, however, is to tell how it happened.

I had no difficulty in the settlement with Mr. Wilson. Then, before the first week of my furlough expired, I received a telegram from Governor Morton, saying he would like to see me in Indianapolis. I responded immediately. Recruiting, he told me, had fallen off seriously in certain districts of the state, and he would be greatly obliged if I allowed him to make some appointments for me to speak. The need was particularly great in the first district.

The proposition was distasteful to me; and, thinking to get away from it, I begged him to call somebody else from the field.

"There is nothing doing there," he said.

Thereat I did a thing foolishly indiscreet.

"No, nothing on the field," I returned; "but they are very busy at headquarters, where I fear I have enemies. The division is very dear to me. If I lose it, I will never get it back."

The governor then brought out a telegram from Secretary Stanton ordering me to report to Governor Morton. It required no Solomon to tell that this was the very thing lying big in my fear—I stood actually relieved of my command. The division was no longer mine.

“I did not ask for this, governor. Did you?”

“Yes.”

“It was an unwarranted liberty with me, sir. I will make the speeches for you rather than do nothing, but you have laid me on the shelf.”

“I can get you back again.”

“You are influential, I know, but not where that power lies.”

“Who is the man?”

“General Halleck.”

The governor flinched and looked away.

“Make the appointments,” I said. “It must be understood, however, that I am through when done with the first district.”

“They are already made. You will begin at Evansville.”

The style was that of a superior, and, seeing myself subject to his order, I left him with ill grace.

“Send me the appointments, if you please. I will begin at Evansville. Good-day.”

We were never friends again; or, rather, our friendship parted then and there with its cordiality. I resented the liberty he had taken with me; he resented my resentment. Let the disinterested judge between us.

I completed my task in the first district; and, if I did no good, it was not from lack of zeal and energy on my part. Having done my best, I returned home to find my worst anticipations realized. The Third Division



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

had been broken up. Only the officers of my staff remained to me. Then, almost immediately, the post brought me a formal order from Secretary Stanton to wait at Crawfordsville for orders.

The mischief was done. I was on the shelf; but for how long? I mailed a copy of the order to Governor Morton. Perhaps he might be magnanimous enough to intercede for me. He had only to speak a friendly word to Mr. Lincoln. Sorry to say the word was never spoken.

Saying to myself, philosophically as I could, there is no star of peace above the horizon; the men of the South, though ever so much in the wrong, are brave and resourceful; the war will last long and I be needed yet—saying this, I resolved on patience. One friend I was sure of—the Kankakee River. Pitching my Heiman tent on its bank in the royal festoonery of its vines and the shade of birch and maples old and gigantic enough to put Virgil's spreading beeches to shame, I hunted and fished through July and on until August was in the wane. Then a call came to me; and, strange to say, the voice was the voice of Governor Morton. Would I be good enough to call and see him?

The need must be pressing, I said to myself; and, putting up my gun and rods, I hastened to Indianapolis.

This is what the governor had to offer.

"Bragg," he said, "has broken loose from Chattanooga. Buell he has left at one side in Nashville. There is nobody between him and Louisville. Indiana is threatened; and you know it is better that Kentucky suffer than Indiana. She helped precipitate the misery."

To that I nodded assent.

He continued: "I have five regiments organized, except that their colonels are not yet selected. I want to send them all into Kentucky in the quickest time

possible. General Morris has agreed to take one. Dumont will take another. Reynolds and Love will each do the same. Now"—he turned to me, confidently—"will you take one? The appointments will be provisional, of course."

The proposition surprised me. I doubted if the officers named—Morris, Dumont, Reynolds, and Love<sup>1</sup>—would do as he said.

Then I thought of my rank. Colonels, I knew, were becoming generals every day, but I had yet to hear of generals dropping back into colonels. And then—the governor was right—the emergency was peremptory, and emergencies always beget opportunities to be of service. Then came the idea: this will take me off the shelf and into the field. Anything to get back into the field! I made haste to answer:

"Yes, I will take one of the regiments. Where are they?"

"The Sixty-sixth is in camp at Jeffersonville."

"Let it be the Sixty-sixth, then. Is it mustered in?"

"No."

"That is bad. We will have to wait."

"For what?"

"A mustering-officer."

The governor looked vexed.

"But Bragg will not wait," he said. "Do the work yourself."

"Easily said, governor; but consider where I may land. In going with the regiment I violate an order—"

"What order?"

"That one I am now under—which holds me to Crawfordsville. And if now I violate the regulations, what is to save me?"

<sup>1</sup> These gentlemen were excellent officers, but not one of them took a regiment as the governor expected.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Well, we can't wait. I will have Secretary Stanton legalize what you do."

By that time I had become as anxious as the governor. Anything to get back into active service! And when he asked me if I could go at once, I answered: "Yes, right away. Give me your instructions. I must have somebody between me and General Halleck."

"I will send the instructions after you."<sup>1</sup>

"Very well."

We shook hands, and, taking the first train, I landed in Jeffersonville the day of the interview. Colonel Ross, of my staff, accompanied me.

A sturdier set of young men than those of the Sixty-sixth Indiana I never had to do with, but so green—indeed, it looked positively sinful to take them into the field. That they were such excellent raw material made it all the worse.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately the muster-rolls were already completed; so I mustered, uniformed, and armed the regiment all in the one day. Nor did I stop with that. Crossing the Ohio River, I drew it up about midnight in the street in front of the residence of General Boyle, then in command of Louisville and the military district of Kentucky.

As my interview with General Boyle may amuse the reader, I give it with some detail. He was living quite democratically, so to speak. I found no impediment in the shape of an orderly or sentinel between the curb of the sidewalk and his door. An old colored man answered my knock, and, with some misgivings, undertook to get the general into the parlor.

"General Wallace—Lew Wallace?" Boyle asked, upon entering.

<sup>1</sup> The instructions were never sent.

<sup>2</sup> The Sixty-sixth Indiana, though unfortunate at Richmond, Kentucky, made for itself an enviable record in subsequent battles.

## LEW WALLACE

He was in night-gear, slippers on. Evidently the excitement, so red-hot in the executive office in Indianapolis, had not jumped over Louisville.

"Yes," I replied. "Come to report."

"I don't understand quite."

"Well, I have the Sixth-sixth Indiana infantry at your door, general, and, as its colonel, I ask orders."

"Orders? I—you— If you are Major-General Wallace, I can't give you an order. You rank me."

Then, seeing an explanation necessary, I said, seriously: "Just now I am colonel of the Sixty-sixth Indiana. Governor Morton sent me over here with it to help you take care of Bragg, said to be at large in your state. Other regiments are coming. Have no scruples about rank. I laid mine aside yesterday, and am a volunteer on special business."

As he still appeared incredulous, I invited him to the door, saying, "Perhaps the regiment will corroborate me."

"No, no," he said, laughing and shaking the skirt of his night-shirt. "The window here looks out on the street."

The long, dark, silent line of men standing at rest impressed him.

"Well—if it must be so," he said, at length, "I'll give you an order. Wait till I write."

The paper, when delivered, proved to be a *special*, directing me to proceed with the regiment to Lexington, Kentucky. In parting with me, General Boyle said, "I still have hopes that General Buell will overtake Bragg and whip him."

I had not reduced the camp to condition next day before a second order from General Boyle was put in my hand, placing me in command of Lexington and of all the troops there. In a ride round I took in my new



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

charge, six regiments of infantry in all, four of them of Indiana. The colonels I quickly notified of my relation to them, and they seemed much gratified, particularly when told that the Confederates might shortly be looking us up.

As the most natural of things, I said to myself, returning from these visits:

“Day before yesterday I was on a shelf pinned down tight; now, what will the chief of all the armies say when he hears of the business I am doing? Will he call me to account?”

Then I took the second floor of the Phoenix Hotel and fixed my headquarters there, first turning the Sixty-sixth Indiana over to Colonel Ross, of my staff, than whom I knew no one more competent to set it up.

My greatest need at the moment was an adjutant-general. While casting about for some one to fill the position, Mr. Henry W. Wadsworth, member of Congress from the Maysville district, came in to see me—it was during recess of the national legislature—and I offered him the place. He accepted; and it may be doubted if in all Kentucky a fitter civilian could have been found. He knew the state thoroughly, its people, its public men, its geography; besides which he had talent of the highest order and was universally known. Figuratively speaking, Colonel Wadsworth threw off his congressional coat, and with me plunged into the exciting business in hand, his whole soul awake and never a man more loyal.

Hardly had I got my raw command in running condition when I received a third order from General Boyle, to understand which resort must be had to events then current.

General Halleck began the dispersal of his army after the evacuation of Corinth by sending General Buell to

Chattanooga, requiring him to repair the railroad from Corinth as he marched. This so retarded Buell that Bragg, Beauregard's successor, reached Chattanooga first. Then the two leaders from the opposite sides of the Tennessee River sat watching each other. Bragg, the first to get ready, at length determined to take the offensive. As a preliminary step he despatched Colonel John H. Morgan into Kentucky and General Forrest into Tennessee to break up General Buell's lines of supply. Both those officers were very successful. Then General E. Kirby Smith marched from Knoxville across the Cumberland Mountains and isolated General George W. Morgan, a Union officer of ability, in post at Cumberland Gap. Buell retired to Nashville; whereupon Bragg crossed the Tennessee River, intending recovery of Kentucky and Tennessee.

The scheme was comprehensive and boldly undertaken; insomuch that when Bragg, with eyes fixed upon Louisville and Cincinnati, left both Buell and Morgan behind him, Oliver P. Morton was not the only governor of a state north of the Ohio River to shiver at the prospect. Withal, however, General Morgan, at Cumberland Gap, more than divided the solicitude excited by the situation. And when now I read General Boyle's third order, containing a direction for me to prepare the force at Lexington and march it to Morgan's relief, I touched my cap to the worthiness of the motive but doubted the soundness of the judgment at the bottom of it.

"Metcalf is down the road with a regiment of cavalry; Jacob, at Nicholasville, has nineteen hundred more; but"—I was presenting the case to Wadsworth—"but neither of them is reporting to me. Then I have no artillery; worst of all, I have no supply train, and cannot get one. To succeed I must go swiftly. How

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

can I do that, and, with infantry, forage for subsistence. Say, then, I at last reach Cumberland Gap without supplies. My thousands of mouths must consume the little Morgan has. No," I said, "if the reports we get are half true, my game is defensive." I pulled down the map, and, pointing to Kentucky River, said: "As I see the situation, this river is our line of defence. We must close the locks and drown the fords and make its passage difficult as possible."

"But what will you do with your order?" Wadsworth asked.

"Go through the motions of preparation and wait. The enemy is coming; he will be in our front within a week and furnish me a sufficient explanation for not doing what General Boyle has in mind."

General John H. Morgan owned an extensive tobacco warehouse in the city. Knowing that by that time he must be familiar with the fortunes of war, the evil as well as the good, I stuffed it full of able-bodied contrabands, intending, if the need were, to use them as laborers. To do them justice, they were willing to earn their rations.

We seized all boats, closed the locks of the river, and stationed guards over them and the fords.

Four guns were discovered at the Cincinnati station, and brought down for forwarding to Cumberland Gap. I took possession of them, impressed horses and harness, found an artilleryman in one of the regiments, gave him a detail of men, and—had a battery with ammunition.

Two more regiments of infantry, undrilled, arrived from somewhere north, and Lexington began to assume a martial air.

Meantime fugitives in increasing numbers came in from the south. From the word they brought it was possible to reduce the operation of the enemy to some-

thing like the fact. General Kirby Smith had not stopped at Cumberland Gap. He seemed to regard Morgan as his, to be picked up at leisure. He was advancing north by the direct road to New London, and had about twenty thousand men.<sup>1</sup> Lexington was his first objective, because from it he could reach out for Cincinnati, Frankfort, or Louisville, as circumstances might favor.

Meantime the loyal Kentuckians of the region poured into the city in organized companies. They were all willing to fight, and accepted service, not murmuring at the kind. Among them were the Goodloes, Gratzes, one or two of the Ashland Clays, and Cassius M. Clay, a commissioned general. I call to mind also Garrett Davis, then United States Senator, and that he brought in a body of his neighbors. In reply to a question, I told him there was but one duty open for him; his age I feared was against him.

"Never mind the age," he said. "What is the duty?"

I took him to the map and pointed to a lock. "That needs strengthening of the guard."

"I didn't come looking for feather-beds," he returned, "but I will be there before morning."

My plan of conduct, it should now be said, was to avoid fighting. To set eight raw regiments in a field against General Kirby Smith's twenty thousand veterans, or to allow them to be come upon by him, would, in my view, have been inexcusable. There was not a moment in which I lost sight of the fact that the defeat or capture of my force, small as it was, would have been equivalent to a surrender of Cincinnati, which I could not help regarding a vastly richer prize to the Confederates than Frankfort or Louisville—richer in con-

<sup>1</sup> The best opinion placed the number of the enemy at twenty-one thousand.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

vertible war material, richer in money, richer in moral effect. Yet some risk had to be taken in view of the collision imminent between Buell and Bragg. In other words, could I keep Bragg deprived of Smith's thousands, greater service to Buell could not be rendered. Reducing the game on my part, then, to the fewest words, my intention was to keep out of Kirby Smith's reach by retreating upon Cincinnati. By leaving the care of Frankfort to Metcalfe and Jacob, with their cavalry, the probabilities were that Smith would divide his force, making my part of the programme proportionately lighter.

Wadsworth, through friends down the road, kept me advised of General Kirby Smith. One day a courier, hitching his horse in front of the hotel, bolted into headquarters.

"Metcalfe," he said, "at a place beyond Richmond called Big Hill, has been attacked and whipped by the enemy under a Colonel Scott. Scott," he further said, "is now not far from Richmond on the other side of the river, and has a thousand or twelve hundred men—possibly two thousand."

Now, of all things, I wanted most to get rid of Scott; for in the retreat to Cincinnati harassment by him was to be dreaded most. A plan presented itself of a likely look. At Big Hill, Scott was by marches two and a half days in advance of his infantry supports. By thrusting Colonel Jacob, lying at Nicholasville, behind him, and moving down the road myself with my regiments, it was possible, the co-operation going well, to catch the Confederate between us and capture or disperse his command. All that was required of Colonel Jacob was an easy night march. Wadsworth approved the venture; and, as it was then about ten o'clock in the morning, I hurried an explanatory note to the colonel urging him to do his

part. "As you come up the road," I said, "I will be going down it to meet you. Only hold Scott till I come."

The column started, making a brave display. My horse was at the door ready for me, and I was writing a note directing Colonel Charles Anderson, at the moment bringing a regiment down from Cincinnati, to remain and take charge of Lexington during my absence, when I heard the clatter of hoofs in the street below, and the jingle of swords. Looking from a window, I saw four general officers whom I recognized—Nelson, Manson, Cruft, and Jackson.

They all came up into my quarters together. After salutations and hand-shaking, General Nelson drew out a despatch and gave it to me, saying: "It interests you. Read it."<sup>1</sup>

It was an order from General Don Carlos Buell, in every way regular, appointing Nelson to command of all the troops at Lexington. Of course, I submitted; Boyle's order to me was not to be weighed against Buell's order to Nelson. So, in all good-nature, I sat with him and explained the situation, telling him of the movement in progress, its object, and what I hoped from it—of the enemy, where he was at that hour, and his strength—of everything, in short, that might be useful to him as a new commander. To be perfectly candid, I expected him to tell me to go on with the operation begun. That, however, was not in his nature.

Then I was taken with a quick and sincere concern for the young soldiers on the march by my order. Nelson had shown no interest in the venture engaging them, neither had he seemed in the least appreciative of its danger; seeing which, I impulsively offered him my services. He curtly declined the offer.

<sup>1</sup> A few weeks later Nelson was killed in Louisville by General Davis, of Indiana.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Wadsworth spoke up, and said, sharply, "Let us go."

When half-way down the stairs, I stopped him. "Hold on. I've forgotten something—a point of honor."

"What is it?"

"I brought the Sixty-sixth Indiana here. I am its colonel."

"You are right."

We returned to Nelson, and I told him my connection with the regiment. "In a sense," I said, "we are in the presence of the enemy. I ought to stay and see the regiment through."

Nelson walked the floor a moment, then replied, with a perceptible softening of manner: "I see your point. But I have three brigadiers with me. They are sufficient. I will see that the regiment is taken care of."

"Very well," I returned. "Colonel Ross, at present in charge of the Sixty-sixth, is of my staff, and aide. Be good enough to have him relieved. I want him to accompany me."

"It shall be done."

At the head of the stairs, as I passed down, I heard the direction—"Manson, follow the regiments; hold them at some place over the river and wait for me. Cruft, go with Manson."

A number of the officers of my staff had by that time joined me in Lexington. Assembling them, I parted with Colonel Wadsworth at the station and took a train for Cincinnati. There was nothing for me to do, it seemed, except go back to Crawfordsville, resume the shelf I had vacated, and make myself comfortable.

In passing, I may be permitted to say that General Nelson ought not to be condemned hastily. It may be doubted if he had ever read Chesterfield on the

## LEW WALLACE

social amenities; nevertheless, that he had brigadier-generals enough for the command is an argument on his side; besides which, I ranked him—a circumstance that might have proved inconvenient to him if not embarrassing.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### LXI

General Nelson's defeat — The defence of Cincinnati — Thomas Saunders—Headquarters at the Burnet House—Mayor Hatch—Martial law proclaimed (September 2, 1862)—Fortifications behind Covington—The "Squirrel Hunters"—Seventy-two thousand men for defence—Buchanan Read.

I WAS finding my rank a serious obstruction to getting back into active service; still, rather than return to doing nothing when so much was to be done, I intended, upon reaching Cincinnati, to tender my services to General H. G. Wright, commanding Ohio as a military department. He was not in the city, nor could anybody tell me where he had gone. His absence may have been a saving clause to him, for he, too, was my junior.

I thought then of going to Memphis. A personal appeal to General Grant might bring me something. Often as this occurred to me, however, another idea called it down. What if General Halleck should ask me again what I was doing in Memphis? And I confess a proper answer did not spring to my mind as readily as a lark rises to meet the morning.

The prospect was dispiriting. I was at my wit's end; and, on the second day in Cincinnati, was making some trifling purchases preparatory to going home when a telegram was given me. I read it a second time, then ordered one of my officers to go across the river and have a locomotive fired up to take me to Lexington in the quickest possible time. General Wright, I told him, had requested that I come to that city—reasons urgent.

That was the whole of the telegram; yet I knew the occasion of it instinctively. General Nelson had allowed his regiments to linger on the other side of the Kentucky River; Kirby Smith had attacked them, and they were defeated.<sup>1</sup> What General Wright wanted with me I could not guess; yet I lost no time going—not a minute. My party filled the cab, and we fairly flew.

At Paris, General Wright, still at Lexington, met me with another telegram. This time he requested that I take command of the troops at Cincinnati and of those arriving there.<sup>2</sup>

I read the despatch between the lines, and saw on the instant that it was to be taken as confirmation of my fears. I thought of the regiments as I had seen them last, looking so martial in the march out of Lexington. They *were* to have been the defence of Cincinnati; but now—no use repining—now, how could Cincinnati be saved? That was the live question.

I ordered the locomotive to a turn-table, and, while the reversal was being had, gentlemen of my staff were reading the telegram. Hardly had we got under way when one of them addressed me.

“Do you mean to accept this request?”

“Yes.”

“You are not bound to.”

“No.”

“There is nothing at Cincinnati with which to make a defence—not a soldier, not a gun, not a fort. To try must end in failure.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The battle, commonly called of Richmond, took place August 30, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> This telegram was dated September 1, 1862.—*War Records*, series 1, vol. xvi., p. 470.

<sup>3</sup> The staff-officer was but a little out of the way. There were, under Colonel Burbank, two or three companies of regulars and four hundred armed men of independent companies at Newport Bar-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The speaker's associates all agreed with him. One of them—the one I held in greatest regard, because I knew the sincerity of his love for me<sup>1</sup>—ventured upon a reminder of my enemies.

When they were through, I replied: "What you say of the present defencelessness of Cincinnati, gentlemen, is too true; and for that reason General Wright's request puts me in a difficult situation. Still, to leave the city to the enemy without an effort to save it would be cowardly; besides that, there is a resource you do not see. I will try it, be the outcome what it may. Should I fail, there will be somebody to divide the consequences with me. What that resource is I will tell you to-night."

There were many more words to the debate, for it lasted almost to Covington; but I give its substance.

My acquaintance in Cincinnati was limited, but it was enough for me to know Mr. Thomas Saunders, landlord of the Burnet House. Besides being a very prince of good-fellows, and well to do, Saunders's loyalty was of the kind that stopped at nothing in his power. I gave him General Wright's telegram to read, and he said, "I see; now what can I do?"

And I said, "Give me your Lady's Ordinary for headquarters."

Within an hour the spacious room was transformed and in my possession. The city pursued its business dreamless of anything in the air out of the usual, and I

racks; and in Cincinnati only three independent companies, which, as it afterwards turned out, served most usefully as rallying-centres for as many regiments. At least one of the three was the old organization somewhat celebrated as the "Guthrie Grays." In addition to these, down the Lexington pike were two regiments, the Ninety-ninth and Forty-fifth Ohio, which, by retreating to Covington, could be made available for the defence.

<sup>1</sup> Colonel James R. Ross, aide-de-camp.

had time without interruption to write a proclamation, which I read to my staff.

"You now have my plan," I told them. "Cincinnati has two hundred thousand inhabitants, and they ought to be able to defend themselves. They can, and I believe they will do it. What they want is direction. Say, however, I am mistaken, that the city is lacking in the right spirit. Behind it are the great states of Ohio and Indiana; the two together have a push the force of which is unknown, because it has never been tried. I mean to try it. If General Kirby Smith will give me one week in which to get ready, I believe we can all lie back and laugh at him."

They saw the scheme, and lent themselves to it with enthusiasm. Only one of them asked, "Without soldiers, how can you enforce that proclamation?"

In reply, I wrote a note to the Hon. George Hatch, mayor of the city, requesting him to do me the favor to come to the Burnet House. The business, I told him, was in the line of his official duties and of the utmost importance. He came, and, after introducing myself, I gave him General Wright's telegram. He had not heard of the battle, and was astonished. I had been told he sympathized with the South, and that might have been; yet, be it said to his credit, no man could have been truer to his trust or more prompt in action.

"You are to put us in a state of defence, are you? How are you going about it? Have you a plan?" he asked, returning the telegram.

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"It is to make the city defend itself."

"Very good, but how? We have no arms."

"Governor Tod and Governor Morton must furnish arms. And as to your people, hear this proclamation



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

which I propose publishing in the morning papers. You will observe it applies to Covington and Newport."

The proclamation was in these words, and he read them deliberately, taking a chair:

### "PROCLAMATION

"The undersigned, by order of Major-General Wright, assumes command of Cincinnati, Covington, and Newport.

"It is but fair to inform the citizens that an active, daring, and powerful enemy threatens them with every consequence of war; yet the cities must be defended, and their inhabitants must assist in the preparation.

"Patriotism, duty, honor, self-preservation call them to the labor, and it must be performed equally by all classes.

"First: All business must be suspended at nine o'clock to-day. Every business house must be closed.

"Second: Under the direction of the mayor, the citizens must, within an hour after the suspension of business (10 o'clock A.M.), assemble in convenient public places for orders. As soon as possible they will then be assigned to their work.

"This labor ought to be that of love, and the undersigned trusts and believes it will be so. Anyhow, it must be done.

"The willing shall be properly credited; the unwilling promptly visited. The principle adopted is, citizens for the labor, soldiers for the battle.

"Third: The ferry-boats will cease plying the river after 4 o'clock A.M. until further orders.

"Martial law is hereby proclaimed in the three cities; but until they can be relieved by the military the injunctions of this proclamation will be executed by the police.

"LEWIS WALLACE,

"Major-General Commanding.

"CINCINNATI, OHIO, *September 2, 1862.*"

The reading finished, the mayor gave the paper back.

"This is martial law," he said.

"Yes, sir."

"You suspend all business?"

"Yes, and all civil authority as well."

"And then what?"

"Every able-bodied man to work or to fight. I give him his choice. Those who say fight we will organize into companies and regiments; to the others we will give spades and picks and set them to digging on the hills in front of Covington and Newport. Think of the earth ten thousand men can move in one day! Then, if the Confederates give us a week, we can get half of Indiana and half of Ohio behind the breastworks."

Mr. Hatch arose and asked, "What do you want me to do?"

"Simply lend your police to enforce the proclamation."

"You may have them."

Seeing the happy turn, I said, "No, I want you to control and direct them."

"Very well. If it is in the power of men, your proclamation shall be enforced. I will see to it personally."

"That is better in every way." And I thanked him, saying, "Only don't forget how precious every minute is."

My success with Mayor Hatch gave me confidence, and I dictated letters to Governors Tod and Morton giving them the situation, with what I was proposing, and asking for arms and all the armed men they could induce to come and lend me their services.

"In the nakedness of Cincinnati," I said, "this is the only hope of saving her from capture, contribution in money, or fire." Then, the same night, I had conferences with the editors and proprietors of the daily newspapers. They all admitted the danger, and, taking my proclamation, agreed to support it; and they did, not one of them faltering.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I doubt if any people were ever taken off their feet like those of the three cities, especially Cincinnati, next morning. The war had been a horror to them, read of as so distant it could not be brought to their doors. Now, suddenly, here it was, and with demands that did not stop with a mere appropriation of their time and a blockade of their business—it actually ordered them to go to work in unaccustomed ways or take arms and be ready to fight. Actually the demands reached to their lives. Let one try to imagine the consternation of the citizen about to open his shop at being tapped on the shoulder by a policeman and told all business was suspended. And what of consolation was there when, to his angry insistence why, he was informed the enemy was coming. What enemy? The rebels. Dwelling in a land of peace and plenty, he had been accustomed to cream for his coffee and hot rolls for breakfast; now the milkman was shut out and the baker shut in. Nor was it contributive to good-humor, if he were a travelling man, to hear at the station: “No train out to-day. Everybody is held up.”

“Everybody?”

“Yes, even the bridegroom and the undertaker—all alike.”

Next day the result pleased me. Thousands appeared at the police stations, not daunted, but anxious to be told what to do. One spirit possessed them. The drilled companies assembled in their armories and organized themselves into regiments; the air throbbed until the beat of drums and unnumbered flags on the house-tops and suddenly flung from the windows freshened the beauty of the sunshine. The women were alike taken with the spirit; before the day expired every ward had its club of them determined to do what they could for the common defence.

While Mayor Hatch organized the masses willing to work, I called the surveyors and civil engineers of the city into school at my headquarters.

"What do you know about military engineering?"

"Nothing."

"You have seen a rifle-pit?"

"No."

"You know on which side of a breastwork the ditch belongs?"

"No."

And I lectured them about running staked lines to the best advantage and digging rifle-pits and breastworks. Getting a map of the country in the great bend half encircling Newport and Covington on the south side of the Ohio River, I instructed them to run lines and mark them with stakes across the bend, for that next day they would be followed by an army of workmen. Out on the Lexington pike crowning the long hill beyond Covington there stood a half-finished bastioned fort begun by General O. M. Mitchell, and named after him. That I adopted as starting-point, from which, in the afternoon, my civil engineers, turned military for the occasion, began their tasks according to instructions.

I remembered being asked: "What about fields and door-yards?" And I answered: "Use them regardless of necessity. The government must stand for damages—only do as little as possible."

The second morning after issuance of the proclamation, thanks to Mayor Hatch and his policemen, I was able to send a working party of quite fifteen thousand men, under protection of the three regiments of Cincinnatians, across the river, provisioned for the day and supplied with ploughs, picks, shovels, and scrapers obtained from the hardware-stores. This, it should be understood,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

was no wild picnic; the multitude went to work, having first selected their own superintendents.

On horseback at the foot of Vine Street I watched the passage of the river—a sight full of cheer and animation. It was then I saw that the ferry-boats, fast as they were driven, skilfully as they were managed, did not meet the requirements of a condition so extraordinary. Besides being too slow, they were insufficient in point of accommodation. Returning to headquarters, I obtained the names of three of the foremost builders in the city and made an appointment for them to meet me in the evening.<sup>1</sup>

I asked them, at the meeting, if they had ever seen a pontoon bridge. They had not; neither did they know anything of the principles of construction of such a bridge. From my trunk I brought down a work on military engineering, and, showing a plate, wanted to know how long it would take them to supply me with such a means of communication stretched across the river from Cincinnati to Covington. They took a few minutes for consultation, then said, if I furnished them a steamboat they would furnish me such a bridge within forty-eight hours.<sup>2</sup>

“Why,” said I, in astonishment, “you can’t build the boats in that time.”

“No, but we will go up into the Licking River and fetch down coal-barges, which, with the help of a steamboat, we will tie and anchor and make into a bridge for you twenty-five feet in width from shore to shore.”

The quartermaster honored my requisitions for material, and within the forty-eight hours—my recollection

<sup>1</sup> I am sorry to have lost the names of the three enterprising citizens.

<sup>2</sup> The pontoon bridge at Paducah, Kentucky, under regular engineers, was three months building.

is thirty hours—the enormous structure was reported ready and a city regiment crossed in platoon front.

In the mean time my appeals to Governors Tod and Morton began to be productive. Tod, it is to be said, was not as prepared for the emergency as Morton. I suppose it had never occurred to him that Ohio, rich, populous, and powerful, could be converted into a seat of war. Now, however, he awoke. At his word, wired throughout the state, its people loaded the trains on every road of connection with Cincinnati, bringing with them the best weapons they had, though but horse-pistols of Revolutionary model.<sup>1</sup> It happened, also, that Mr. Miles Greenwood had in his foundry at Cincinnati ten Napoleon guns in readiness for the field. These the governor turned over to me. Morton, on the other hand, in the beginning of the war, had established an arsenal in Indianapolis. In furtherance of his policy of defending Indiana in Kentucky, he now sent me all he had of ordnance.<sup>2</sup> Besides which his people along the Ohio border came down in thousands. Between Indianapolis and Cincinnati his trains had right of way at all hours on every railroad.

I make now a statement that will no doubt be sur-

<sup>1</sup> I remember a Scotchman who appeared with a claymore inherited from a Highland forefather.

<sup>2</sup> In the chamber of the city council there was—I do not know if it is there now—a full-length portrait of Governor Morton, ordered by the council and painted by T. Buchanan Read. It was the council's tribute to the governor as "the Savior of Cincinnati." I think to excuse myself for taking exceptions to the object of the picture as stated. In the first place, Governor Morton did no more towards making the defence of the city practicable than Governor Tod. In the next place, he took no part whatever in the military operations—I mean, in person. Once, while the enemy was lying in camp before Covington, he visited me at my headquarters there, but left within fifteen minutes without a suggestion or remark of pertinence to the work in progress. He had come sight-seeing merely.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

prising. The morning reports that came up to me every day were, of course, informal, yet they were intelligible. That of the sixth day (the fifth subsequent to the issuance of the proclamation) showed seventy-two thousand present for the defence of Cincinnati and its neighboring cities. Of these, fully sixty thousand were irregulars. Such a gathering, if only on account of its numbers, begets a multitude of inquiries.

The irregulars, so called, were in most part from Ohio, but with a supporting force indefinitely large from Indiana. Coming with pistols, shot-guns, sporting-rifles—in short, all the arms usual to the unwarlike citizen—we called them “Squirrel Hunters.”<sup>1</sup> Arriving by rail singly and in small groups, with now and then a home-guard company, all at their own expense, how could so many be received, fed, organized, and disposed of in so brief a time?

Fortunately there was in Cincinnati an army paymaster, Major Malcolm McDowell. Besides being possessed of an aptitude for handling men in masses, he had an energy not to be tired. By my appointment the major took hold of the crowds rushing in, had them received at the stations, formed there, if not already organized, and then marched to the old market-house that used to stand where the Probasco Fountain now offers an angelic presence in bronze. There the patriotic women welcomed the recruits and plied them with baskets of sandwiches and a river of coffee that did not cease flowing day nor night. Then, upon notice from Major McDowell, I distributed the newcomers to the best of my judgment; nor can I remember an instance of murmur from any of them.

Seventy-two thousand men! What did I do with

<sup>1</sup> The name given them by Major McDowell.

them? Fifty-five thousand of the best-armed, including the Cincinnati regiments, I posted behind the breastworks and rifle-pits, which by that time were complete and stretching almost continuously from bank to bank of the great bend of the Ohio River centring on Covington and Newport.<sup>1</sup> With these were the garrisons of Fort Mitchell and its three supporting works down on the Lexington pike drawn from the regulars at Newport Barracks.<sup>2</sup> About fifteen thousand were stationed as guards at fordable places above and below Cincinnati, for the river was in its lowest stage. To keep in communication with these guards, to patrol the river night and day, and to assist in holding the fords, I had impressed sixteen steamboats, and, organizing them into a flotilla, put it in command of an old river captain, John Duple by name, as perfect a type of his class as the time afforded. While but a commodore by grace, he was of the stuff admirals are made of. Duple defended his boats with bales of hay securely lashed in place, and for each of them he had two six-pounder brass pieces and ammunition in plenty. With him sailed the residue of my force, about two thousand or twenty-five hundred in number.

Now it must not be thought I did all this work unassisted. In the few days it rushed along there came to me from all parts of the country officers of every branch of the service—engineers, artillerists, cavalrymen, captains and colonels of infantry, quartermasters, commissaries, surgeons, among them many really able men. These, fast as they reported, were assigned to duty. Without them my army, calling it such, had

<sup>1</sup> Included also were the regiments regularly enlisted, the number of which I cannot now remember.

<sup>2</sup> The making artillerists of these regulars was a happy suggestion of General Wright.



sunk into an unmanageable mob. A few of them, though I am not writing history, deserve mention because they were especially useful. Colonel Stanhope and General Green Clay Smith were with me from the beginning. General A. J. Smith, of the regular army, commanded a section of the defences, as did General Judah. So, also, General John Love, of Indianapolis, though not in the service, took charge of the works from Fort Mitchell westward to the river. About the fourth day General Gordon Granger brought in a brigade of veterans; but, after dumping them down haphazard, retired across the river to private quarters, and remained there without reporting to me. General Granger, finding my rank intolerable, employed himself trying to have me deposed, and a regular—himself, I suppose—put in my place. Of the Cincinnati contingent I should not fail to mention Colonel Neff, of the First Regiment, and Mr. Dickson, in charge of the colored brigade, as he was pleased to denominate it. Nor must I forget Mr. R. M. Corwine, a lawyer of Cincinnati, whom I appointed to command the large body doing duty at the lonesome crossing-places up and down the river. His headquarters steamer was never at anchor, and no soldier could have better performed his singular trust.

Turning from the serious for a moment, probably no officer in command at any time during the war, not excepting General Frémont, had a volunteer staff comparable to mine, whether in *personnel* or numbers.

Cincinnati in that day was the residence of many gentlemen of distinction in life—actors, poets, artists, writers, journalists, lawyers, preachers, doctors, jurists. Fast as these came to my knowledge, I appointed them aides-de-camp, requiring but two conditions: one, that they provide themselves with horses equipped for rid-

ing; the other, that each should report to me every morning ready for orders.

*Conglomeration* is not a classic word, but I venture to apply it to this portion of my staff, swollen soon to about one hundred and fifty members. I choose the word, moreover, because it will help the reader imagine the composition of the military family by which I presently found myself surrounded. To do them justice they executed orders promptly and with becoming intelligence. Then, at night, the day's work done, the camps on the thither side of the Kentucky cities all still—I shall never forget the assemblages in the Burnet House, in which each as called on did something in his line of distinction; now it was a story, now a song, now a recitation. It was in this way I made the acquaintance of James E. Murdoch, the actor, and Thomas Buchanan Read, painter, poet, recitationist, and, all in all, the most lovable of men.

Now, as a rule, there was nothing in the riding of these improvised horsemen in the least suggestive of the Centaur or his modern prototype, the cowboy. Once—it was on Sunday—I assembled them all to accompany me in an inspection of the works from end to end, about ten miles in all. In front of the Burnet House their sober citizen garb detracted but a little from the brave appearance they presented. On the farther side of Covington, the Lexington pike stretched out up-hill quite a mile and a quarter. There I shook the reins over John's neck and called, "Come on!" At the top of the long ascent I stopped and looked behind me. Of the whole array there were but two within call—Buchanan Read and Leslie Coombs, of Kentucky, the latter said to have been old at the close of the Revolutionary War. The rest, scattered singly and in groups back as far as the edge of the town, were coming

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

slowly and painfully on. Of some it was reported they never got out of town. Be that as it may, I never saw my staff together again.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Read used to say in boyish way that was charming, "I have fallen in love with many a woman, never with but one man—Lew Wallace."—*S. E. W.*

## LXII

General Wright returns to Cincinnati—Orders countermanded and reissued—Captain Worthington—General Heth's advance—Spies on both sides — Heth falls back — General Wallace thanked by Chamber of Commerce and Ohio legislature—What followed.

ABOUT September 4th—the date I give from memory—General Wright returned to Cincinnati, and by his order, as the situation was becoming critical, I transferred my headquarters to Covington. Immediately a great pressure was brought to bear upon him by certain individuals to permit them to open their shops and stores, and, yielding, he modified my proclamation according to their wishes. The bad effect became instantly apparent.<sup>1</sup> Men in the works, and those carrying muskets, themselves shopkeepers and in business, raised a cry—and justly, as I thought.

Among the venturous spirits of Cincinnati participating in the siege was a Mr. Worthington, an educated, pleasant-mannered young gentleman, whom I recognized as *Captain* Worthington, because he brought me a company of well-mounted horsemen, than which nothing was more indispensable; and I gave the captain and his riders plenty of occupation.<sup>2</sup> Through them I first heard of the enemy coming northward by the

<sup>1</sup> Three days afterwards General Wright found himself compelled to ask Colonel Burbank, my successor in command of Cincinnati, to send him three thousand citizens for fatigue duty. The trenches were almost abandoned.

<sup>2</sup> Later on I was to meet the same Captain Worthington again under circumstances even more strange.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Lexington pike. The Colonel Scott, at whose hands Colonel Metcalfe had been whipped at Big Hill, below Richmond, still in lead of the hostile column, tried his veteran skill on Worthington's troopers, but without effect. Besides being better mounted than Scott, Worthington knew the country as men ordinarily know their door-yards, an advantage that made him slippery as an eel.

The information brought me through the captain proved reliable and encouraging. At Lexington, General Kirby Smith had divided his army into two columns. One he himself led against Frankfort, and successfully; the other, consisting of nine thousand men of all arms, he gave to a General Heth, with directions to proceed to Cincinnati. This division of forces was as I had anticipated; and now it was in General Heth and his following my interest centred.

Undoubtedly, had Heth moved with directness of purpose from Lexington, it had not been possible to have saved the city from him. Its very defencelessness, however, helped thwart him. In excessive confidence, he journeyed leisurely along, helping himself to cattle and horses on the way.

In the forenoon of the seventh day after the battle of Richmond, Scott and his cavalry gave place to Heth's solid column in front of Covington; and the crisis was come.

From a parapet of Fort Mitchell I saw through my glass a number of gray-coated gentry mount to the roof of a house. It was easy to surmise what that meant. My opponent was reconnoitring. Captain de ———, an excellent artillery officer, commanding the fort, trained one of the great guns upon the party and begged to fire. I forbade it. There were women and children under the roof; but, if that were not enough,

good policy, as it appeared to me, demanded that the enemy should be allowed to see from a distance all he could of what he had to go against.

General Heth, it had been reported to me, was a graduate of West Point. That he had been selected to conduct the expedition was ample evidence of his capacity.<sup>1</sup> I knew fairly well why, having reached his destination early in the day, he had halted instead of at once ordering an assault. The fort commanding the pike had caught his soldier's eye, and, riding to the right and left, he had taken account of the long line of freshly made yellow breastworks and the masses of people blackening the undulations behind them. It had been more than singular had he failed to be impressed as well as surprised by what he beheld. The American behind a field-work, though ever so slight, and though no soldier, had his established character for courage. And of that, doubtless, the general also paused to take account. Moreover, to attack, it was wisdom on his part first to find the weakest point; for in every fortification there is always such a point.

In expectation that the weak place would be discovered, knowing also that in such case I must, in the quickest time, get a force to the danger-point sufficient to cover it, I had a telegraph line set up the whole length of the works, with stations at every regimental and brigade headquarters. Now I wired everybody to be careful against surprise, and as a means to the end to double the pickets and look out that they were properly advanced. In the execution of this order there was a skirmish, in which I was delighted to see my raw men behave admirably. Three of them were slightly wounded; one lost a hand. These were the only cas-

<sup>1</sup> He afterwards charged with Pickett at Gettysburg.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ualties I heard of as a result of collision with the besiegers.

There was another incident, comparatively trifling in itself, which yet showed the spirit of the people engaged in the defence. The night of the appearance of the enemy information reached me that a detachment of Colonel Scott's had seized a grist-mill at or in the vicinity of a small town known, I think, as Florence, and was operating it for food supply. By my order Captain Worthington made a *détour* at night to Scott's rear, ran the Southern millers off, and burned the property, returning without a man lost.

Two days passed during which Heth lay in his camp apparently idle. Meantime two citizens of Lawrenceburg, on the river below Cincinnati, at my suggestion passed behind him and came up from the rear as if from Lexington. Riding boldly into his camp, at headquarters they represented themselves in search of a couple of runaway negroes.<sup>1</sup> The pretence worked like a charm. To find the fugitives they were given all privileges within the lines. They failed, of course; nevertheless, they brought me a statement of the force in my front by regiments and batteries, the cavalry inclusive, the whole footing up, as said, about nine thousand men.

Meantime, also, there were alarms without number; and always in such instances the getting under arms was prompt and really beautiful to see.

Another day, the second of the siege. Farmers bringing hay in from the country presented themselves, asking permission to pass through with their wagons. It was suspicious, but, being consulted, I advised that they be let come. Their report as spies, I thought, could do

<sup>1</sup> The men were selected by Colonel Ben. Spooner, of Lawrenceburg, at my suggestion.

us no harm. During the second night, also, there was heliographing with lamps in the windows of houses across the river in Cincinnati. That, too, I allowed, with conclusions that General Heth was by no means as idle as he would have me believe; neither was he friendless.

All that second day my people, in momentary expectation of an attack somewhere, remained under arms; but it passed without incident—in fact, without a shot fired. Could General Heth be waiting for reinforcements? Where was General Buell?

In the evening a friend came to see me.

"I am from Mr. ——'s house over in the city," he said, "and have some interesting news for you."

"Well, what?"

"A consultation was held there this afternoon, ending in an agreement to telegraph Secretary Stanton to appoint General Granger or General A. J. Smith in your place. It's a dirty piece of business. What do you want us to do to stop it?"

I thanked my informant, but said: "Nothing. Let the gentlemen go on. The secretary knows the enemy is here; he knows, too, that this is not the time to do the swapping proposed. And, besides, I haven't time to engage in a squabble."

My friend departed angry to the soles of his boots, and swearing.

Nevertheless, the information was disturbing. It had been an almost sleepless week for me, and I confess to a hope cherished in secret that if Cincinnati were saved, a command would be made up for me out of regiments of enlisted men that had been arriving. But now the hope grew sick, and I perceived my position was so very uncertain that almost any kind of a *pull* would be enough to bring me down. If General Wright were



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

lending himself to the plot, I might look for my *congé* at any moment.<sup>1</sup>

During the night of the 11th, unrest was noticed in the enemy's camp, and reported to me. Either he was making ready to give us work in the morning or getting together and pulling up for departure.

At all events, the hours were of sharp anxiety—that I also confess. For ever since the completion of the bridge I had been subject to a dread only a little less frequent in the day than in the night, when all was still. If Heth rushed the works with all his might, and my citizen soldiery fell into a panic, each of them would betake himself to the bridge, and then what wholesale drowning there might be! Often as the idea, black with horror, came to me, I thought of the passage of the Beresina by the French retreating from Russia.

I make no disguise of my satisfaction—joy might be the better word—when at daybreak a messenger galloped in to tell me the enemy was gone. In doubt of the fact, I ordered the camp beaten up; but it was so. My people were eager to pursue; in fear, however, of a ruse to entice us out of our intrenchments, I restrained them; and not until the afternoon did I suggest to General Wright that he permit me to select some of my best organizations, supported by General Granger's brigade of veterans, and go down the Lexington pike, not so much to fight as to make sure that the retreat was final. The request was declined; and I am not disposed to question the wisdom of the decision.

The retreat assured, the necessities for keeping the people from their business were gone, and the day suc-

<sup>1</sup> I have reason to believe, from what I afterwards heard, that General Wright was approached in the business, but peremptorily declined to have anything to do with it.

ceeding, in the forenoon, the city regiments—four, as I now recollect—were formed into column and marched across the river to the market square, where they were formally thanked and relieved from duty.<sup>1</sup> It was a splendid triumphal march, with music and banners, through a multitude apparently innumerable on the streets and crowding every vantage-point of sight on roof, window, and sidewalk. The soldiers were proud, as they had reason to be; so were the friends and families who welcomed them; so was I. Indeed, that was one of the gladdest days of my life.

There can be no question, I think, that my services were fully appreciated except in Washington and the executive office in Indianapolis. Acknowledgments poured in upon me from every quarter save the two, silencing my detractors, especially such of them as had made light of the danger and my methods of meeting it and the other set who had sought to displace me.

The city council held a meeting and passed the following resolutions, no one dissenting:

“CITY CLERK’S OFFICE, CINCINNATI,  
“October 18, 1862.

“*Major-General Lew Wallace:*

“SIR,—At a meeting of the City Council of the City of Cincinnati, on the 17th instant, the following resolution was unanimously adopted: *Whereas*, The danger that threatened Cincinnati is now removed; and believing that this community is largely indebted to Major-General Lewis Wallace for his untiring energy in organizing the forces and completing the preparations for defence, therefore, *Resolved*, That the City Council of the City of Cincinnati bear cheerful testimony to the energy and ability displayed by Major-General Lewis Wallace in the difficult

<sup>1</sup> That day, the 12th, the “Squirrel Hunters” were ordered to return home, but it was several days before they were all picked up.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

duty to which he was assigned, and hereby tender him our gratitude, and desire to express to him our high appreciation of him as a soldier and a gentleman. *Resolved*, That the foregoing Preamble and Resolutions be placed upon the records of the City, and a copy forwarded to General Wallace."

This is attested, as usual, under the hand and official seal of the city clerk, George M. Casey.

In March following I received at the hands of Governor Tod joint resolutions of the legislature of Ohio:

*"Resolved*, By the Senate and House of Representatives, that the thanks of the people of this State are due and are hereby tendered through their General Assembly to Major-General Lew Wallace for the signal service he has rendered to the country at large in connection with the army during the present war; and especially for the promptness, energy, and skill exhibited by him in organizing forces, planning the defence, and executing the movements of soldiers and citizens under his command at Cincinnati in August and September last, which prevented the rebel forces under Kirby Smith from desecrating the free soil of our noble State. *Resolved*, That he [Governor Tod] be, and he is hereby requested to transmit a copy of these resolutions to Major-General Lew Wallace.

(Signed)

"JAMES R. HUBBELL,

"Speaker of the House of Representatives.

"P. HITCHCOCK,

"Pro tem. President of the Senate.

"Dated *March 4, 1863.*"

The correctness of the copy is certified by W. W. Armstrong, secretary of state.

In a communication, September 6th, General Wright was pleased to say officially:

"The general commanding also instructs me to say that the zeal and energy you displayed at a time when the

LEW WALLACE

city was almost without defence has gone far towards providing for its security, and that you will, by taking the immediate command of the forces at Covington and its vicinity and promptly organizing them for action, accomplish what yet remains to be done to that end.

(Signed)

“N. H. McLEAN,

“Asst. Adjutant-General and Chief of Staff.”<sup>1</sup>

These are proofs of service too plain to need comment or interpretation. Perhaps, however, a better idea of the value of the service can be gained from an incident.

Some time after the war—two or three years possibly—I happened to be again at the Burnet House, and was informed that General Heth was also a guest. I sought him out, and invited him into the basement, where, in that day, private conversations were generally conducted with the bar in sight. He was a frank, candid, quiet gentleman, and, “the great unpleasantness” over, neither of us could see why a discussion of the “siege of Cincinnati” should not be enjoyed.

Among other things I asked him if he believed he could have taken the city.

“Yes,” he answered.

“Why didn’t you?”

“My column was in motion to attack,” he replied, “when I received an order from General Kirby Smith to rejoin him in haste, as Bragg was retreating from Kentucky. But for that I would have got in behind you at a place on the west which you had left undefended and unguarded.”

“It was a narrow neck between the river and the foot of the large hill on the south and right, was it not?”

“Yes, that was the place.”

I replied, “Perhaps it was well enough you did not

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xvi., p. 491.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

try it, for it was the next best defended section of the whole line. Across the river, in easy range at the foot of Race Street, I had four guns in a lunette covered with tarpaulins. The gunners were in an empty warehouse at the top of the level. Below the bridge there were also six gun-boats, each with two six-pound brass pieces, giving me sixteen guns available against you. Besides that, within an hour I could have covered the hills on your right hand with fifty thousand sharp-shooters. It was just the place for my irregulars to show their handi-craft."

Further on in the conversation the general said, lightly: "I knew what you were doing in Cincinnati and the Kentucky towns. My men were going in and out all the time."

"As farmers and market-men?"

"Yes."

"Oh, I knew it, but offered no hinderance, believing, if they told you the truth, it would make an impression upon you." And I retorted by giving his regiments, guns, and cavalry, and telling of the men sent down from Lawrenceburg. He looked curiously a moment, then broke into a hearty laugh, saying:

"I recollect those fellows. They searched everywhere for their runaway negroes. I even invited them to dine with me."

Continuing the conversation, I asked, "Now, if you had taken Cincinnati, tell me, won't you, what you would have done with it?"

"I will answer Yankee-like," he returned, good-naturedly. "What do you think Cincinnati worth?"

"In money?"

"Yes."

"Probably five millions."

"More than that," he said.

"Well, say ten millions."

"It is a great city," he replied—"a great city, and rich, and the people think a great deal of it. And if I had proposed to its authorities to sack it from end to end or that they should redeem it with fifteen millions, or such a matter, which do you think they would have preferred?"

General Heth did not say so directly, but left me to infer a purpose to impose a heavy contribution upon the city had he taken it.

It is to be said here that every point in the scheme for the defence of Cincinnati had been mine, inaugurated before General Wright could return to the city, and without consultation with him or any gentleman of his staff. And now, the defence being a decided and almost bloodless success, what recognition was I to receive for the part I had borne in it? True, with respect to the department in Washington, I was supposed to be at home waiting for orders; and that I was not, therein lay a chance to hold me for violation of orders. Far from thought of such a thing, I even flattered myself that of the twelve or fifteen regiments of regularly enlisted men—the exact number has escaped me—then in camp behind Covington and Newport, a division would be created for me to take to the field, whither I was so desirous of going.

Let us see what happened. The surprise may be as great to the reader as it was to me; fortunately for him, he cannot be as much mortified.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For General Wright I have nothing but compliment. Seldom, as I see it now, is an officer put in a situation more trying than fell to him. Between the opposing cries of Louisville and Cincinnati for help, and conflicting judgment and demands of the governors of Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana, and the appeals from his decisions by official gentlemen high in the confidence of President Lincoln—between these the prospect of being ground to dust was never so promising. Yet the result proved him the good soldier and excellent man he certainly was.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### LXIII

Ordered to Columbus—Camp Chase—State of camp and men—  
Paid off—Ordered to Minnesota to fight Indians—The stay in  
Columbus—Murdock's readings for the Sanitary Commission.

WHEN the war fairly opened and prisoners began to be taken in numbers, a system of parole was tacitly recognized by both parties. The paroled soldiers became non-combatants; and then the question what to do with them arose.

In the West a camp was established for them at Columbus, Ohio, and the name of the secretary of the treasury given it. In course of time Camp Chase grew in population until, at the period of which I am writing, a census—if I may use the term, no other being so good—showed an accumulation of between five and six thousand. I am speaking, it should be observed, of paroled Union soldiers.

The quarters in Camp Chase—barracks would be a term of very improper application here—consisted of wooden shacks originally well enough for a few. But, as the increase went on, the accommodations grew scantier and scantier, until at length thousands were thrust in to occupy what had been intended for hundreds. We are in the habit of speaking and thinking of Andersonville as the acme of horrors; it may have been so, indeed, but of this I am certain, Camp Chase was next it, the difference being that Andersonville was a Confederate hell for the confinement of enemies taken in arms, while Camp Chase was a hell operated by the

old government for friends and sworn supporters—its own children.

The unfortunates billeted there were of every state loyal to the Union. Orphanage is a condition that excites sympathy—here the condition was far worse—here the wretched inmates were wholly without relation except as they found it in one another. They were all outside the pale of sympathy. On the part of soldiers a certain suspicion attached to one taken prisoner; they wanted to know the circumstances under which the taking took place, and until satisfied on the point kept a stern grip upon their condolences. Then as to the rest of the world, the government included, the paroled men in Camp Chase were *non est*, as much so in fact as if they had not been born. Among them there were many officers, captains, lieutenants, but, being without right of command, and none of them strong enough by nature to assume the right, the camp was allowed to take care of itself; insomuch that many men, well-bred and intelligent, instead of trying what virtue there might be in government, by-and-by accepted the doom of the lost and forgotten, and sank into indifference. They ceased to have communication with relatives and friends. Day after day they met as one can imagine the inmates of some of Dante's circles meeting—not for society, but to make comparison of wretchedness. By-and-by, also, they became objects of dread. Columbus, the city, but a few miles away, the dome of its capitol almost in sight, slept uneasily thinking of them. Even the charitable, good men, good women, always ready to share of their store with a Boy in Blue, shunned the camp as if it were a nest of pestilences dangerous to be looked at in the distance. At stated intervals a commissary sent wagons with rations down to the miserables, and the food was dumped out without requisition,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

there being nobody of authority to sign the necessary paper. As for the quartermaster, he acted upon the theory that the men must eat, but it mattered not if they went naked. Of course, they died, scores of them; in want of medical attention, they died of the diseases always incident to crowded quarters and an absence of the simplest hygienic preventives—fire, fresh air, and sweet water.

This, I know, will be a surprising revelation to many of my readers; nor can I say who was responsible for it. That great soul, august in its loneliness, and full of jest because not to jest was to yield to the awful burdens it upbore, Abraham Lincoln could not have known the conditions existing in Camp Chase. Neither could such a camp have endured a day in the vicinity of the capitol in which Oliver P. Morton was in the habit of raising his voice and having his will. I speak of it now, not from hearsay, but personal knowledge, as will presently appear.

About September 18th, while yet in command of the army at Covington and Newport, I received a telegram from General Halleck—I speak from memory as to the person—ordering me to proceed to Columbus, Ohio, immediately. Arrived there, it said, you will take command of the paroled prisoners in Camp Chase, organize, pay, and clothe them, and when that is done secure transportation, and with them go to Minnesota for the purpose of quieting the Indian outbreak in that state.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is no record of the events to which I now proceed unless newspapers of the time be so accounted. The date I fix by reference to an order issued by General Wright, September 19th, directed to General Green Clay Smith, as follows: "General A. J. Smith has been appointed to succeed General Wallace in command of the forces near Covington and Newport, Kentucky. Make your reports to and receive orders from him."—*War Records*, series 1, vol. xvi., part ii., p. 529.

In reading the telegram I could hardly believe my eyes. It is needless to dwell, I think, upon the effect produced, or to say how sorely my pride was wounded. The good words showered upon me from all sides in connection with the siege of Cincinnati only intensified my disappointment and whetted the edge of the mortification. That the order was intended deliberately and with malice aforethought to put me to shame seemed glaringly plain. Not impossible there was a further intent behind it to drive me out of the army. Enough that I wrestled with myself all night before finally resolving to go to Columbus on the duty prescribed. As for fighting the Indians of Minnesota, I felt sure of discovering a way to avoid such an inglorious disposition of me. I also continued to believe firmly that it was in me to be useful in the larger field if my enemies would give me a chance; and if at the same time I acknowledge a quiet determination to retain my commission, if only to disappoint them, whosoever they might be, I think every one reading will excuse me.

My staff, I have pleasure in saying, were loyal to me, although in the going to Columbus there was much of the appearance of a retreat with colors crêped. The feeling was of that nature also. With everything of military property belonging to me, I took rooms in the Neal House, registering on a day next that of the receipt of General Halleck's order.

My intention being to despatch the business before me as quickly as possible, I spent a greater part of the first night in posting myself. My predecessor in the duty had left a provost-marshal behind him. Him I sent for—a smart gentleman, cynical and somewhat inclined to profanity.

“What's the situation in Camp Chase now?” I asked.

“There are five or six thousand men there, officers

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and privates," was the reply. "The exact number nobody knows. It's a herd of men, not a camp. I've not been in it lately. My life-insurance policy expired a few months ago."

"Do you mean it is dangerous?"

"I don't like," said the captain, "to deal in the incredible, so I respectfully suggest that you form your own opinion after a personal inspection. This I will say, the people of the town here are scared; even the governor has been asking for more troops, mine being the only company."

"Against the camp?"

"Against the herd there."

"Why do you say 'herd'?"

"There are beasts there."

Gradually I got the officer into the details given in the commencement of this chapter. He advised me if I went to the camp to go with an escort.

"Escort? Of what?"

"Your staff and my company."

I also interviewed the landlord; and all he gave me corroborated the provost-marshal, particularly in that the city was in a state of alarm.

"What is it afraid of?" I asked him.

"Fire."

Next morning I mounted John, and, sworded and sashed, *en règle* in every particular, I betook myself to Camp Chase, my curiosity greatly excited.

Reaching the camp, I directed my horse to the quarters of some captains whose names I had secured the night before. My appearance was a signal for commotion. A hurried survey of the shacks shocked me. They were stained a rusty black; the windows were stuffed with old hats and caps; greasy blankets did duty for doors; the roofs were of plank, and in places planks

were gone, leaving gaping crevices to skylight the dismal interior.

The men came running together; and, if they were ready to mutiny, I knew wherefore.

The officers, whom I found readily, were genteel-looking and spoken. After informing them who I was, and my business, I told them to go out and get the entire camp into line, as I wished to address the men. It was probably an hour before, with other officers whom they had picked up, they returned to tell me of a line formed.

I got, then, into the saddle again. No man—I say it dogmatically—ever had a more sullen audience than that in front of which I drew rein. They permitted me to finish the sentence—that President Lincoln had heard of their sorrowful state and sent me to organize, pay, clothe, and put them into a new camp. Of duty in Minnesota I breathed not a word; yet instantly the semblance of a line went to pieces and resolved itself into a multitude that rolled around and walled me in.

Such a sight I had never seen or imagined—men long-haired and bushy-whiskered, their faces the color of green cheese; most of them without head-covering of any kind, or coats or shoes; some in dirty cotton drawers and wrapped in old blankets in lieu of shirts. Looking down upon them—God help me speak the truth—I could see vermin crawling over their unwashed bodies, while the smell with which the mass thickened the air about me is in my nostrils as I write, it was so pungent and peculiar.

The men, while shaking their clinched hands at me, kept vociferating something I had difficulty in understanding, the clamor was so furious. When at length I did make it out, it was of this tenor, with variations: “We’ve heard all that before. You’re a liar. Get out! —get out!”



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I tried to look cool; if I succeeded it was an imposition well practised. Some officers elbowed through the jam and exerted themselves to get a hearing. I think they saved me from a rush; although I was not without a resource, since the dash of a spur in John's flank would have sent him through the roaring wall like a thunder-bolt.

The scene endured. At last there was a lull, and I got in a word. "You say you've heard what I tell you before; but not from me. I'm a new man, and demand that you hear me."

Then presently I got another opportunity, and finally a hush, which I thought from partial exhaustion. "Try me," I said. "If I fail my promise, then mob me. I'm coming out here every day."

Here one of the crowd shouted, "What do you want, anyhow?" A hundred voices took up the question.

"I want you to cut your hair, wash your faces, shave, and be the gentlemen you were when you enlisted. I want to put new uniforms on your backs. I want to take you out of this hell-hole into fresh tents. I want to put money in your pockets."

"What?—say that again," cried a man, raising his hand.

"I want to put money in your pockets," I shouted back.

"Ha, boys! That's new. The other fellows never said that."

"No," I made haste to say, "because they never had the authority. I have to say and do it."

"Tell us now what we have to do," said the same man, adding, "I've eighteen months' pay due me."

In a great hush, then, seeing my advantage, I told them in a few words what to do; that is, to organize themselves into companies, choose for officers any of

the captains and lieutenants in the camp, have them make out pay-rolls, and with them come to me at the state-house in the city, and in the great hall there I would see each one paid off to the last cent.

"Now, do you understand?" I asked.

"Yes—yes."

"Well, then, open a way for me out. I must get back to town. To-morrow I'll come again."

They made way for me civilly.

It is to be said now that while still of opinion that the order under which I was acting was intended to degrade me, I was glad of it; the wretched prisoners had my sympathy, and I determined to deal justly by them.

In town again, at the solicitation of a committee of citizens asking protection, I had the provost-marshal establish a mounted picket against the camp.

Next day, with Colonel Ross, I went back, and was surrounded as before, though noticeably with less noise and no menaces. The men were told at the close of the interview that I would wait for them in the capitol.

Two days then passed. On the third, one of the pickets came in to advise me of a company on the road to town. "So," I said to myself, "the heaven is working."

In my first evening in Columbus, a paymaster quartered in the city had informed me he had money in his safe. Without further question I jumped to the conclusion that it was for use in paying off the prisoners. Now I hurried Colonel Ross to request the major to bring his funds, set tables in the hall of the state-house, and have everything ready for the company upon its arrival. To my astonishment the major begged to be excused—the money, he said, was for another purpose specially.

Meantime the company arrived and was standing halt-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ed in front of the gate. A spasm of anxiety seized me; indeed, a live coal dropped between my coat collar and naked neck had not burned me worse. Everything depended upon prompt payment, now that a test delegation—so the presence at the gate was to be viewed—had come—everything, my personal honor included. I wrote a peremptory order to the paymaster, but with no better result. This made me desperate. I *must* have that money; so I ordered Colonel Ross to put the major under arrest, take the key of the safe from him, forcibly if he must, and bring the money. Ross was the man to do what I required, even to breaking the paymaster's neck; and this time he was successful. There were apologies and an explanation of surrender to force. I think I never breathed easier, and found more life in what I breathed, than when the company at the gate marched into the state-house, and, the rolls being accepted, payment went merrily on to the end; after which there was another march to the quartermaster's for clothing. One could hardly think these, in their new uniforms, the miserales so lately threatening to mob me.

The company was returned temporarily to Camp Chase. In my view, each with money to show—some of them had full two years' pay—was a missionary to his fellow-sufferers. Indeed, so confident of success did I then become that I ordered a new camp-site selected, and tents, white, sweet, and never before used, set up for the penitents. By the middle of the next week Camp Chase stood empty of all save its vermin and the recollections of misery endured there.

So far very good. But now it was necessary for me to tell the occupants of Camp Tod—the name is from recollection—that they were to be marched to Minnesota to fight Indians, a thing not one of them had

dreamed of when he enlisted. How would they receive the news?

I remembered, when telling the mob in Camp Chase that I wanted to put money in their pockets, a man had exclaimed:

"That suits me. I will go home."

The human nature in the outburst was plain, and, somehow accepting the idea as to what would happen, I quietly ordered things to bring it about; that is, I preferred they should go home; for, to be perfectly straightforward, my own soul was in rebellion against indignities not less than the proposed service. I felt assured, moreover, that the people of Minnesota were numerous and brave enough to take care of themselves. Cincinnati had just set them an example.

As a step preliminary to action in the matter, arms and equipments for five hundred men were taken out to Camp Tod. Then, giving its denizens a day or two in which to make comparison of the life there and in Camp Chase, I visited them. It was in the morning. Pretty soon the companies were assembled — as yet regiments had not been formed—and I spoke to them from the saddle.

They were told in bluff words what was ahead of them; that they were now, by order of Major-General Halleck, to take cars for Minnesota, where there was a rebellion of Indians that had to be suppressed. The sensation was positive. Men looked at one another in mute inquiry. One of them called out:

"What of the rebellion here?"

I told him it was not for us to ask questions, but to obey orders.

"We must have done with foolishness and get down to discipline," I said next, "as the Indians had not lost their cunning with rifle and scalping-knife."



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Then Colonel Elston, acting assistant adjutant-general, read a table of hours of service that would have made Cæsar's oldest legionary berate the day he was born. I named an officer of the day and an officer of the guard, and ordered the necessary details for guard duty to report immediately, as I myself would superintend the mounting and establish the lines. Everything being ready, arms were issued; after which the camp was as securely locked in as any I had ever seen.

Now for the result. Next morning, before breakfast, a courier appeared at headquarters, still in the city, with a report. The guards were gone, he said; they had left their guns against trees and in fence corners, but not a man of them could be found.

This was wholesale desertion, and, to say truth, exactly what I had anticipated. I essayed a deal of virtuous indignation, and, calling for my horse, rode at his best gait to camp. There everybody was put into line, and I abused the deserters to the best of my ability, swearing in conclusion that discipline should be observed. To make the declaration good, I ordered the guard doubled, and set drill to going.

Here I think the story of Camp Tod may be cut short. So, briefly, the next morning brought me a repetition of incident—the guard was gone, leaving their arms and accoutrements. Again I had details doubled, with the same result—no old guard for turning off in the ceremony of mounting. And again the same—and again—and again, until at length there was nobody in Camp Tod except officers and a few sick men. The rest had taken trains at stations above or below Columbus, and, with money in their pockets and good clothes to disport, were hurrying homeward. In my opinion it would be unfair to classify them as ordinary deserters.

## LEW WALLACE

It remained for me to make report; and I did it to Secretary Stanton, advising that the absconded prisoners be let alone for a time. Such a course, I argued, would be economical to the government, while the pay-rolls rendered at Columbus, together with the original muster-rolls, would always serve to identify the individuals. If they failed to join their proper colors voluntarily, public opinion might be relied upon to drive them in, or they could be easily apprehended. The report and suggestions were approved by the secretary; upon which Camp Tod ceased to be, and I was again without orders or duty.

The excitement, anxiety, and hard work of the three or four weeks thus taken up were not without relief. Columbus was then, as it is now, noted for the culture and refinement of its society, and I was not allowed to become an anchorite. Of all the enjoyable hours, however, I recall none so delightful and perfectly to my taste as a series of entertainments given in the Opera House by Thomas Buchanan Read and James Murdoch, the actor. Their audiences were jams without standing-room. Loyal souls were they, making their genius tributary to sufferers in military hospitals. Their nightly receipts were small fortunes—yet they took nothing for their services, not even expenses. I was very happy to have them for my guests at the hotel, where Rogers, the sculptor, whose home was Italy, used to join us.

All gone now—all.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### LXIV

Relieved of command—Appointed on the Buell Commission to preside—Donn Piatt—Benn Pitman—Buell—Proceedings of the commission—Report.

IF I did not become an all-around soldier, it was not the fault of my superior in Washington. Out of his dislike I was next led into an entirely new experience. It came about in this way.

After Columbus, as I have said, I was out of duty; and, being again taken with the old longing to get back into the field, I determined to go down and see General Grant; possibly he might be prevailed upon to give me something to do. It struck me also as good strategy were I to set out before my bad angel at headquarters could devise an interference for me. I got as far as Cairo, Illinois, in my flight when a telegram overtook me; only this time it was from General Grant, informing me of an order in waiting at Cincinnati. Thither I went, of course, and the order read:

“(Special Orders, No. 356.)

“HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, ADJT.-GEN.’S OFFICE,  
“WASHINGTON, *November 20, 1862.*

“1. A Military Commission will convene at Cincinnati, Ohio, on the 27th instant to investigate and report upon the operations of the army under the command of Major-General D. C. Buell, U. S. Volunteers, in Kentucky and Tennessee.

“*Detail for the Commission.*—Major-General Lewis Wal-

## LEW WALLACE

lace, U. S. Volunteers; Major-General Edward O. C. Ord, U. S. Volunteers; Brigadier-General Albin Schoepf, U. S. Volunteers; Brigadier-General N. J. T. Danna, U. S. Volunteers; Brigadier-General Daniel Tyler, U. S. Volunteers; Major Donn Piatt, Aide-de-Camp, Judge-Advocate, and Recorder.

"The Commission will adjourn from place to place as may be deemed advisable for the convenience of taking testimony and will report an opinion in the case.

"By command of Major-General Halleck.

"E. D. TOWNSEND,

"Assistant Adjutant-General."

The duty here prescribed was only a little less acceptable than field duty; this because it would be educational, and at its conclusion I should have been a student under three officers supposedly as proficient as any of the old army—Charles F. Smith, H. W. Halleck, and Don Carlos Buell.

My connection with Smith and Halleck has been dealt with; now Buell, having the privilege of defending himself before the commission, would become a professor with daily lectures giving the movements of his army and the reasons of them. Strange, indeed, did I fail to extract some wisdom from what was to be thus heard. In my capacity as president of the commission, moreover, it would always be in my power to have things rendered explicitly.

Then, it is not to be lost sight of that the presidency of such a commission carried with it more than a compliment; it was, in fact, a declaration on the part of the upper military authority, General Halleck included, of confidence in my capacity and a growing respect for me generally.

I do not propose giving much space to this episode, for such I regard it. One curious about its details will



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

find them in full in the *Records of the Rebellion*, series 1, vol. xvi., part i., where they occupy seven hundred and thirty-two closely printed pages.

The commission organized in Cincinnati, and began taking testimony there; after which it became peripatetic. From Cincinnati it adjourned to Louisville, and thence to Nashville; thence back again, finishing at Cincinnati, May 6, 1863. The months were months of daily session and continuous labor. I think the record will show me always present. Without the aid of a stenographer it had been endless.<sup>1</sup>

One of the members, General Schoepf, was released from the investigation in middle stage. With that exception the commission continued unchanged to the end.

Major Donn Piatt, the judge-advocate, was a versatile gentleman well known in his day as a wit of the humorous school. He gave us to understand at an early period of our sessions that we were "organized to convict"; meaning, as we took him, that Secretary Stanton and General Halleck were desirous of getting rid of General Buell, and had selected us to do the work. This we did not believe; but it left Major Piatt stripped of respect. In the language of the present day, the expression was a "break" on his part—a break, however, with result that every member of the commission was thereafter upon his guard.

Confronted by any other general officer of my acquaintance, the judge-advocate would have distinguished himself, for he had ability and showed it; but dealing with General Buell his strength was of the silk-floss variety. In the atmosphere of that cold nature humor could not live and wit was a plant too weak to flower.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Benn Pitman, the father of American stenography, served the commission faithfully and ably.

General Buell's status before the commission was peculiar. There was no charge against him of any kind, not even of a failure in command. We were not to investigate him, but a series of operations conducted by him. We were not a court; he was not a defendant; yet the most extraordinary features of the whole proceeding were the use he made of his privileges of appearance before us, and the lawyer-like capacity he unexpectedly developed. His examinations of witnesses, cross and original, were masterful, his arguments brief and admirably worded, and he allowed nothing to divert or excite him.

Socially he had nothing to do with any of the commission. At table he and Mrs. Buell sat by themselves. Upon notice of a session begun, he would walk in and seat himself without a bow of recognition or a good-morning; upon adjournment, he would gather his papers together, tuck his sword under his arm, and exit, his chin a little elevated, his eyes studiously to the front. He never smiled or volunteered a remark not strictly *apropos* the business in hand. The labor he performed unassisted was prodigious. Indeed, the commission had not sat its first day through until I thought I knew the reason of his unpopularity, greater with officers than with the men—it was his manner, of the kind to beget belief that all human interest was dead within him, the sympathies included.

Having said so much, I must go further. Don Carlos Buell was a very capable general. As an example of what Jomini calls "Logistico, or the Practical Art of Moving Armies," the march of his three corps by as many roads from Louisville until the enemy struck him at Perryville was a feat of its kind unparalleled during the war—I came near saying unparalleled in any war. He was brave and laborious, and, despite accusations

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

to the contrary, loyal. On the latter point we held our commission open to all informers; no one was found to attack him under oath. Withal, however, he was either too cautious or too rigidly methodical to be great or successful in the hour of battle. Such is the lesson taught by his operations beginning with the movement from Corinth against Chattanooga and ending with the battle of Perryville.

With me, at least, interest in the work of the commission continued to the end. The subject of investigation, of course, had much to do with this; yet there was another feature scarcely less contributive—it was the number of men of military distinction called before us as witnesses. The names of some of them will illustrate my meaning: of generals, A. D. McCook, Thomas J. Wood, George H. Thomas, Lovell H. Rousseau, Gordon Granger, Thomas L. Crittenden, W. Sooy Smith; of colonels, W. H. Lytle, A. D. Streight, John T. Welder, John F. Miller, Daniel and Edward McCook, Robert Macfeely, Gustavus A. Wood, and George D. Wagner.<sup>1</sup>

I cannot now recall another commission or any military court assembled during the war honored with the presence of so many officers of distinction. Of them all—and afterwards they were all yet more distinguished—none made an impression upon me like General George H. Thomas. This was not merely because of his appearance, so suggestive of a majestic lion in repose; his calm, thoughtful manner had to do with it. To hear him was to concede that here was a soldier over whom conscience exercised control vastly greater than ambition.

The opinion reported by the commission was enclosed in a big pine store-box forwarded to Washington filled

<sup>1</sup> The commission tried to secure the personal attendance of General Halleck, but failed.

with the testimony taken. Afterwards a congressional committee called for the opinion, but it could not be found. Somebody had purloined it. Fortunately I had a copy with which the hiatus was filled; and as I wrote the paper, it may prove interesting, aside from its historic importance. It is as follows:

*"Opinion of the Commission.*

"The order convening the Commission requires it to investigate and report upon the operations of the army under the command of Major-General D. C. Buell in Kentucky and Tennessee. 'It further requires the Commission to report an opinion in the case.'

"Very early in its sessions the Commission resolved to direct its investigations to the following points:

"1st. The operations of Major-General Buell in Tennessee and Kentucky.

"2d. Suffering Kentucky to be invaded by rebels under General Bragg.

"3d. The failure to relieve Munfordville.

"4th. The battle of Perryville and conduct there.

"5th. Permitting the rebels to escape without loss from Kentucky.

"6th. Inquiry and report upon other matters touching military operations above specified as in the judgment of the Commission shall be beneficial to the service.

"The first point really comprehends all the rest; but convenience required such a division of the subject.

"The sixth point, it will be perceived, is general, and was made to cover such subjects as—

"1st. General Buell's loyalty, against which there is no evidence worthy of consideration.

"2d. General Buell's policy towards the inhabitants of disaffected districts into which his policy extended. This we find to have been what is familiarly known as the conciliatory policy. Whether good or bad in its effects, General Buell deserves neither blame nor applause for it, be-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

cause it was at that time understood to be the policy of the government. At least he could violate no orders on the subject, because there were none.

*"2. Suffering Kentucky to be invaded by rebels under General Bragg.*

"We find that the rebels under Bragg concentrated at Chattanooga about the 22d of July, 1862, for the purpose of invading Kentucky. Prior to that, on the 11th day of June, General Buell, with his Army of the Ohio, was ordered by General Halleck to march against Chattanooga, and take it, with the ulterior object of dislodging Kirby Smith and his rebel force from East Tennessee. We are of the opinion that General Buell had force sufficient to accomplish the object if he could have marched promptly to Chattanooga. The plan of operation, however, prescribed by General Halleck, compelled General Buell to repair the Memphis & Charleston Railroad from Corinth to Decatur, and put it in running order as a line of supply during the advance. While that road proved of comparatively little service, the work forced such delays that a prompt march upon Chattanooga was impossible. The delays thus occasioned gave Bragg time to send a numerous cavalry force to operate against General Buell's lines of supply, which were unnecessarily long. So successful were the incursions of the cavalry that no opportunity was found, after the Memphis & Charleston Railroad was completed to Decatur, to concentrate enough of the Army of the Ohio to capture Chattanooga and execute the ulterior purpose of the expedition.

"The massing of the rebel force at Chattanooga compelled a relinquishment of the design against that place; after which General Buell was required to exert all his energies to prevent the recapture of Nashville and the invasion of Kentucky. This he could have done, in our opinion, by an early concentration of his army at Sparta, MacMinville, or Murfreesborough, with a view to active

offensive operations against Bragg the moment he debouched from the Sequatchie Valley. Instead of that, he waited until the 5th of September before concentrating at Murfreesborough, from which he retired to Nashville, thereby allowing Bragg to cross the Cumberland River without interruption. The Commission cannot justify the falling back from Murfreesborough to Nashville, but is of opinion that it was General Buell's duty from that point to have attacked the rebel army before it crossed the Cumberland, and it is the belief that had that course been pursued Bragg would have been defeated.

*"3. The failure to relieve Munfordville.*

"In the relative movements of the armies of Generals Buell and Bragg, Munfordville was important on account of its railroad bridge over Green River and its natural strength as a position for battle. Bragg moved upon it by way of Glasgow, and, not anticipating great resistance, he despatched a column in advance of his main body to take it. The column was repulsed by the garrison on the 14th of September. Bragg then moved his whole army against the post. On the 17th of September it was justifiably surrendered. The order to hold Munfordville proceeded from General Wright, commanding the Department of the Ohio, of which Kentucky formed a part. It was given in expectation that General Buell would reach the place in time to save it. General Wright seems to have had no certain information upon which to base his expectations; at the time the order was given he only knew that both Bragg and General Buell were advancing towards it. Nor was there any undertaking on General Buell's part to relieve the garrison or any preconcert of action whatever respecting it. We are of opinion, therefore, that the orders given the commander of the post should have left him discretion to fight or retire according to circumstances. As it was, the order was to hold it to the last. Had not Bragg moved so quickly on Munford-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ville he would have been attacked at Glasgow by General Buell, who was moving to the attack when the surrender took place. Defeat of the rebels at Glasgow would, of course, have saved Munfordville. While General Buell was on the march to Munfordville he heard of its surrender. Relief was then too late.

"It is our opinion, therefore, that General Buell is not responsible for the capture of the town, except so far as his failure to attack Bragg south of the Cumberland River made him responsible for the consequences of that failure.

### *"4. Battle of Perryville and conduct there.*

"General Buell left Louisville about the 1st of October with a force superior, in our judgment, not only to Bragg's army, but to the armies of Bragg and Kirby Smith united. His routes were well chosen and the advance of his columns admirably regulated. His immediate object was to attack the rebels and destroy them; failing in that, he was to drive them out of Kentucky.

"Engagement was expected at Bardstown, but Bragg sullenly retired towards Perryville, at which place it would seem from his orders and instructions to corps commanders General Buell next intended to attack him on the 9th of October. Positions for the formation of the line of battle were defined in those orders.

"Accordingly, on the morning of the 8th, Gilbert, with his corps, was in position in the centre; McCook, with his corps (less Sill's division), arrived on the left about nine o'clock, and Thomas, in command of the right wing (Crittenden's corps), reached position and reported his arrival to General Buell about noon.

"About two o'clock in the afternoon the enemy poured a heavy column of attack upon McCook, effecting, in our opinion, a partial surprise. The contest, however, was obstinate and bloody, and ended by nightfall, at which time McCook's right had been turned and driven back with serious loss. The duration of the battle was about five hours.



"There can be no question about its being the duty of somebody to assist McCook. As his right had been posted not exceeding three hundred yards from Gilbert's left, and as the severest fighting was on McCook's right, we cannot see why Gilbert did not reinforce him when so requested. He should have done it if for no other reason than because McCook's discomfiture exposed his own flank. Nothing but positive orders fixing and holding him in his position can justify his failure. If such there were, they have not been heard of in the testimony. Moreover, it is clear that all General Buell's orders were in preparation for attacking the next morning, not in anticipation of being attacked that day. In this latter event, therefore, the exercise of discretion could not have been improper if the action taken had been promptly reported to headquarters, particularly as General Buell was not on the field for instant consultation. As it was, assistance did not reach McCook until about dark.

"General Buell established his headquarters about two and a half miles from the front on the Springfield road. He was not on the field or along the line during the day, and had no intelligence of the attack on McCook until four o'clock in the evening. About two o'clock a heavy and furious cannonading was heard at his headquarters, and, coming out of his tent, he said, 'There is a great waste of powder over there,' and directed General Gilbert, who was with him at the time, to send an order to the front 'to stop that useless waste of powder.' It is clear to us that General Buell did not believe a battle was in progress, and that he supposed the firing heard was from some reconnoissance. On this point it is our opinion that he should either have been on the field in person ready for emergencies and advantages, or have taken, and required to be taken, every precaution for the instant transmission of intelligence to his headquarters. As he had an organized signal corps with his army, the failure was all the more culpable. And in this connection we are of the opinion that General McCook's failure to send up instant



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

notice of the attack upon him in force was equally culpable.

"We find that during the greater part of the attack on McCook, Gilbert's corps was unengaged, while Thomas's wing had not so much as a demonstration made against it. We have reason to believe, also, that all Bragg's army at Perryville at the time was flung upon McCook, and that his lines of retreat by way of Harrodsburg and Danville were so exposed that after four o'clock they could have been to a degree, if not entirely, cut off if Crittenden's corps had been vigorously pushed forward for the purpose. In our judgment the opportunity slipped through General Buell's absence from the field or on account of his ignorance of the condition of the battle. We are very sure that if he could have ordered supports to McCook at an earlier hour than he did order them, the attack would have been repulsed with less loss to himself and greater to the enemy.

### *"5. Permitting the rebels to escape without loss from Kentucky.*

"It cannot be said that the rebels escaped without loss from Kentucky. Besides their killed and wounded at Perryville, they were compelled to destroy a large quantity of stores which had been collected at Camp Dick Robinson.

"The morning after the battle it was very early discovered that Bragg had retreated from his positions near Perryville, and that his army had for the most part gone in the direction of Harrodsburg. Leaving all his sick and wounded and some material at Harrodsburg, and being joined by Kirby Smith, he hastened across Dick's River to Camp Dick Robinson. There he destroyed and abandoned the stores mentioned and resumed his retreat. In these movements the march of his columns was hurried; that part of it from Perryville to the river was confused and disordered. Our opinion is that, if General Buell had taken up a vigorous pursuit as soon in the morning of the

## LEW WALLACE

9th as the retreat was discovered, the check received by the rebels at Perryville would have been turned into rout, with all its consequences. But the manner in which they were followed to Harrodsburg can hardly be called a pursuit. General Buell should have endeavored, by energetic movement of his whole army, to crush them somewhere between Perryville and Dick's River.

"From Camp Dick Robinson, Bragg had but two roads left him by which he could hope to escape from Kentucky. Dividing his forces at Crab Orchard, one portion of them could go out by way of Cumberland Gap, the other by way of Somerset. Had General Buell intercepted him on these lines, as we think he could have done, from either Perryville or Danville, Bragg would have been compelled to give battle, with the same results, we doubt not, as if he had been defeated before crossing Dick's River.

"The evidence establishes that General Buell received information on the night of the 11th that Bragg had crossed the river at Camp Dick Robinson; yet he made no determined movement with the main body of his army until twelve o'clock in the night of the 13th. From the morning of the 9th to the night of the 11th he waited to learn whether his enemy would cross the river; that being definitely known, he lost two days before taking any decisive action. Finally, on the night of the 13th, as stated, he started Crittenden's corps through Danville towards Crab Orchard. It was then too late; Bragg, with his column and all his train, had passed the point of interception. To this delay we are compelled to attribute the escape of the rebels from Kentucky.

"LEWIS WALLACE,

"Major-General and President of Commission."<sup>1</sup>

The opinion given received the unanimous affirmative vote of the commission. No amendment to it was offered.

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xvi., part i., p. 8.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Whoever reads it will notice that the failure of the operation against Chattanooga is actually laid to General Halleck, who tried to break the argument in that particular by an *Indorsement*<sup>1</sup> wholly without proof. Be the judgment upon this *Indorsement* what it may, it is a clew, I think, to the culprit who *lost* the opinion.

It is also to be said that the return of such a finding by the commission did not help me to favor in General Halleck's eyes.

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xvi., part i., p. 12.

## LXV

Again relieved—Telegrams from Halleck in Cincinnati—Morgan's raid—Called to Morton's assistance—Sherman's letter to General Wallace—Sherman's conversation with Grant—Telegram to Secretary Stanton, declining to make speeches in the campaign, September 21, 1863.

AGAIN I was without occupation, and, after a few days to parting calls in Columbus, betook myself to Crawfordsville and the Kankakee River.

Weeks passed, the fairest of the year, during which my hope fed upon itself. They were weeks crowded with events.

Hooker, defeated, was back at Centreville on the defensive. Lee followed him, and was now across the Potomac, his eyes fixed greedily upon Washington. All in the land north shuddered. Where would the invasion stop? The governor of Pennsylvania, a good man, called to arms; but his people, too incredulous to be alarmed, heard him with indifference. Fifty thousand of them at length responded, and then he had not enough general officers. There was opportunity in the need.

Down in the Southwest, also, everybody seemed busy. Grant had his hand on the gate of Vicksburg. Grierson had returned from his great raid, declaring the Confederacy but a shell. Of battles there were new ones for inscription on the flags—Port Gibson, Raymond, Jackson, Champion Hills. My reports to Washington in the mean time were frequent. The authorities there knew



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

my whereabouts. In short, the situation in the field and somebody's personal hostility were too much for my patience. If only to be moving, I went to Cincinnati, resolved, if unable to get to Vicksburg, to tender my services to Governor Curtin, of Pennsylvania. It might be he would take me. This was in the latter part of June, 1863.

At Cincinnati I had an impulse of prudence. Perhaps it would be better to get permission, whether the going were to Vicksburg or Harrisburg. So from the Burnet House I telegraphed General Halleck:

"Is there any objection to my visiting Vicksburg?"

I waited a week for a reply, and, getting none, again wired the general-in-chief:

"Receiving no prohibition, I infer your assent, and will go to Vicksburg to-morrow."

This brought a reply the same day.

"No, prohibition does not give assent. You are to await orders at Cincinnati, and will not leave that place without proper permission."

This did not quell me entirely. I was not forbidden to use the telegraph, so I forwarded the following to the same authority:

"I respectfully ask leave to tender my services to the governor of Pennsylvania."

Next day <sup>1</sup> I had reply:

"Your application to report to the governor of Pennsylvania has been submitted to the secretary of war, and is not granted.

"HENRY W. HALLECK, General-in-Chief."

<sup>1</sup> June 27th.

I was not only debarred from service at a time very perilous to the cause, but was a prisoner with Cincinnati as bounds. Realizing the predicament, I wrote General Halleck to allow me to return to Crawfordsville, and this he graciously accorded.

It is the unexpected that happens. John Morgan, the famous Confederate brigadier and rough-rider, conceived the idea of raiding Indiana. The project was in aid of General Bragg, sorely straitened down in Tennessee. The noise of an armed progress of the sort would be heard afar, and, besides stopping the stream of reinforcing regiments in constant pour from that state, it would also compel heavy detachments of veteran troops from the front. Such was the argument; and, while yielding to it, Bragg positively interdicted a passage of the enterprise beyond the Ohio River. Yet Morgan persisted, and on July 7th actually crossed the Ohio from Brandenburg, Kentucky.

Morgan, it has been said, was lured into Indiana by promises that the display of his flag there would be the signal of rebellion by a secret organization known as "Knights of the Golden Circle."<sup>1</sup>

If there was a grain of fact in the report, the conduct of the raiders ruined the programme. Hardly were they on Hoosier soil before they began plundering, burning, and killing. It availed nothing that a man was a Democrat or a Knight. Sympathy at once turned to

<sup>1</sup> Such an organization not only existed, but reached the danger-line in Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. Its members held meetings in the school-houses of my own country, and drilled openly. To overawe them, I brought the seven Home Guard companies to Crawfordsville and exercised them in regimental tactics. This was in the summer of 1863.

A reliable history of the "Knights of the Golden Circle," or "Sons of Liberty," as they were sometimes called, may be found in the report of William H. Terrill, Adjutant-General of Indiana, vol. i.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

disgust, and presently to rage. The columns that formed to pursue the indiscriminating ravagers were compounded without regard to politics.

General Morgan also mistook the possibilities of success in his venture. He made no allowance for the fighting character of the people. Governor Morton's telegram of alarm and appeal reached every hamlet and farm-house in the state, and within forty-eight hours sixty-five thousand men responded, with arms, ready to take the field.<sup>1</sup> Save at Cincinnati the uprising was without parallel.

About July 9th a telegram from Governor Morton reached me while fishing on the Kankakee. It was very urgent in terms, asking me to hasten to Indianapolis; and, knowing from former experiences that such calls were served upon me only in red-hot emergencies, I pulled up everything and reported in person the morning of the 10th.

The consternation in the city was general; strange to say, however, it was greatest in the executive office. In fact, that was the only time I ever saw the governor manifest alarm. Telling me of the raid, its unexpectedness, and the lack of preparation to meet it, he spoke with flushed face and in a voice perceptibly unsteady. Nevertheless, the "frame of mind" had not weakened the extraordinary energy which was a part of his nature.

In the course of his explanation, he said: "Morgan has only to make haste, and nothing can save Indianapolis. Bad enough that; but it is not all. In camp here we have quite six thousand Confederate prisoners, and out in the arsenal a supply of arms and ammunition to make them instantly ready for the field. Add them

<sup>1</sup> Adjutant-General Terrill's *Report*, vol. i., p. 178.

to the six thousand veterans now with him, and Morgan can demoralize the state."

The reason of the governor's alarm was obvious.

"In the next place," he said, continuing, "Morgan has General John Love shut up in Vernon with about a thousand of the State Legion. Last night demand was made upon Love to surrender. Love answered by a counter-demand of surrender. Fighting may be going on now, and what I want of you is that you go to his assistance."

With that he gave me a telegram from Secretary Stanton, detailing me to help in defence of the state.<sup>1</sup>

"Very well," I said; "I am ready. General Love came to my aid at Cincinnati. What force can you give me?"

"About four regiments."

"When can they move?"

"This afternoon."

"Then I will go to the Madison depot and wait for them. Meantime, please order the necessary cars, and rations for three days."

He promised to do so, and I left him.

Major Pope, my chief commissary, met me at the depot, and was charged with getting rations for four regiments of five hundred men each.

If a fight were progressing, time was invaluable. Noon came, but no command. A little later the supplies were delivered. Then a train of unclean cattle-cars backed into the station for me. Four o'clock, and still no soldiers. I rode to see the governor, and a curious conversation ensued:

"Night is coming, governor. Where are the regiments?"

<sup>1</sup> The order had been on Governor Morton's request.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

And he replied, "I find I can't get more than eleven hundred men for you."

"Only eleven hundred? Old soldiers or new?"

"New—very new."

I took the insufficiency in at a thought, and asked, earnestly, "Do you want me to take eleven hundred raw men to meet Morgan's six thousand veterans?"

"If I could get you more, I would."

A suspicion crossed my mind.

"Governor," I said, "you don't want me to fight Morgan."

He was silent.

"If Morgan sets his face towards Ohio," I persisted, "you would prefer to have him pushed through Indiana rapidly as possible?"

I remember the governor's answer distinctly: "I do not want him turned this way. We are not in condition to meet him."

"Well, everything is behind him now—Hobson, with his four thousand mounted men; Hughes and his militia, almost as many."

I went to a map on the wall and put my finger upon Osgood, saying, "If you wish Morgan stopped, this or hereabout is the place for me. I can reach it by rail before he can with his tired horses, and I will take chances holding it until Hobson and Hughes come up. Shall I go to Osgood or to Vernon?"

His reply I also remember almost in its very words, it was so diplomatic:

"The first necessity is the relief of General Love."

And I said: "I think I understand you, then. First, relieve Love; then push Morgan on into Ohio—the faster the better."

With that he allowed me to take my leave.

When I got back to the station the eleven hundred

were there; so were the supplies; but there was an extra trouble—the cars were so filthy that the men refused to enter them. Colonel Gregory, one of the commanders, happened to be an old soldier, and together we finally shamed the recalcitrants out of their disgust.

The train reached Columbus about ten o'clock in the night. I stopped there for the last preparation. Calling for axes, I had the plank on the left side of each car knocked off; if we were attacked, it was of the utmost importance that the companies should all debark on the same side of the train, whether they took to their heels or stayed to fight.

A locomotive was standing on the track in our front. While the axe-men were at work on the cars, I sent for the engineer, who proved to be one of my three-months men. I shook his hand warmly, and asked if he were willing to do me a favor.

"Yes," he said, "I'll go to hell, if you say so. Only tell me how to get there."

"That's too far for one night's journey," I said. "Just run your locomotive ahead of me to Vernon."

"I'll do it."

"All right; but remember this—if you run into the enemy give three quick whistles and open the throttle and let her sing, to make believe the whole state is coming. My train will keep about a mile behind you."

We kept slowly on through the night. There were with me, as volunteer aides, United States Senator Henry S. Lane and Professor John L. Campbell, of Wabash College. Every moment, as we went, I expected the three signals from the pilot ahead; so that altogether the ride was a spicy trial of nerve to my two staff-officers.

Dawn was turning the world gray as we rolled uninterruptedly into the little town of Vernon. The first man to meet me was my soldier friend, the engineer.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"No fight to-day," he called out. "He's gone. By this time he's fifteen miles away."

A great weight rolled off me.

"Gone, you say?"

"Yes."

"In what direction?"

"East."

I hastened to the telegraph-office, and, to relieve Governor Morton, wired him:

"Morgan did not attack Love. He is now miles away, going towards Ohio. I shall wait the arrival of Generals Love and Hughes. Together we can follow safely, pushing as we have opportunity."

To hope to overtake the wily raider with infantry was idle. Once, however, I had an impulse to get up with him, and telegraphed for permission to impress wagons with which to make a forced march of twenty-five miles. The governor declined the request, satisfying me that his gratification would be complete when he heard the enemy was being vigorously entertained in Ohio.

With General Hughes and his column I carried my command to Osgood, thence to Sunman's Station, a good point from which to repulse Morgan should he, foxlike, double on his track.

After various adventures, the invader was captured on the 26th near Salineville, Columbiana County, Ohio, within a few miles of the Pennsylvania border. He had but two hundred and fifty men of the thousands with which he crossed into Indiana from Brandenburg.

The raid was false in military principle. Without losing an hour to plunder people along the route, its leader should have dashed straight at Indianapolis. The arsenal and the army of prisoners in camp would

## LEW WALLACE

have enabled him to do the terrorizing in aid of Bragg down in Tennessee in which lay his sole justification. As it turned out, he lost everything. He had not genius for the venture.

This flurry over, I went back to my shelf. And still, though Governor Morton would call me to his help as often as emergencies arose and when something trying was to be done, and though I always responded promptly, he kept silent about that which was deepest in my heart—a command in the field suitable to my rank.

In August I wrote General Sherman. After congratulations, I asked him to give me some duty, stating if it were under him—he was yet my junior—I would be most happy.

I have his reply in the original, and keep it carefully, a very precious souvenir. My feeling is that it should be published, not merely because of the kindly expressions to me personally, but for the character it exposes. No successful man was ever less tainted with jealousy than he; and, aside from the common-sense marking every line in the paper, no one can read it without being impressed with the writer's devotion to the Cause, in him masterful over all else, even ambition.

“HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH ARMY CORPS,

“CAMP ON THE BIG BLACK, MISSISSIPPI,

“August 27, 1863.

“*Major-General Lew Wallace, Crawfordsville, Indiana:*

“DEAR GENERAL,—I was much gratified at the receipt of your letter of August 16th, and accept the tender you make of congratulations at the success which has marked our recent campaign. I assure you that I regret exceedingly that General Grant had not carried with him throughout his entire campaign the generals with which he opened it, and Donelson was as important a beginning as the capture of Vicksburg, the end of the great design.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"General Grant is now up the river, and when he returns I will endeavor to convey to him your proper expressions of confidence without in the least compromising your delicate sense of honor. I have reasons to know that the general esteems you as possessing as large a share of high soldierly qualities as would satisfy the ambition of most men, and that he would readily aid you to regain the high position you held in the estimation of the country. If I can aid you, it will afford me real pleasure.

"We have all made mistakes, and should be generous to each other. Some men possess one quality, others another; but all can be made to subserve a great whole. General Grant possesses in an eminent degree that peculiar and high attribute of using various men to produce a common result, and, now that his character is well established, we can easily subordinate ourselves to him, with the absolute assurance of serving the common cause of our country. For my part, I would be glad that every general officer should have an appropriate command, and that all should learn from our short military career that we can only gain a permanent fame by subordinating ourselves and our peculiar notions to that of the common commander. I will not say that you have not always done this, but I do think if I were you I would not press an inquiry into the old matter of the Crump's Landing and Shiloh march, but leave that till war is over. Subsequent events may sweep that into the forgotten of the past. I would advise that as soon as possible you regain command of a division, identify yourself with it, keep as quiet as possible, and trust to opportunity for a becoming sequel to the brilliant beginning you had. I think I appreciate the feelings of gentlemen such as you and many others of our general officers; but I do say that in war there can be but one solid foundation for a lasting fame. A single occasion can give a meteor-like reputation, but real, enduring fame can result [only?] from long, patient, hard labor, study, courage, and actual experience which can only be gained by continuous service with armies in the field.

## LEW WALLACE

"I do not think General Grant or any officer has any unkind feeling towards you. Some one or more may have been envious of your early and brilliant career, but, as I know you must be ambitious of more lasting and real fame, I feel that with the advice of unselfish friends that end is still within your reach. There are some of our generals (necessarily chosen in haste by a distracted government) that are consumed by a gnawing desire for fame and notoriety, who are miserable if any one achieves a little more than they, but I know you are not of that class. I believe you have a proper desire to be appreciated, but probably have been a little impatient at the slow process. But now that the public mind is toned down to a pitch that will admit of waiting for the natural developments of time, I think you, too, would be willing to fall into our slower school. I have been more frank than you probably expected, but I assure you that I will gladly serve you in the best way I know how, and that is in giving you my honest, unselfish advice. Avoid all controversies, bear patiently temporary reverses, get into current events as quick as possible, and hold your horses for the last home-stretch.

"The war is not yet over. The South has still a large army; and though we have made large inroads, yet her people have an ugly, keen, and desperate spirit, and we must not presume too much. For all real, hard-working, and self-sacrificing soldiers there is still a large future. If these my ideas approximate your convictions, it will afford me great satisfaction to assist you in regaining your true place among the young and conspicuous generals of the war.

With respect, your friend,

"W. T. SHERMAN."

This letter, when studied, made a strong impression upon me — the more so as I recalled General Sherman's own trials at the beginning of the war; how as military governor of Kentucky he had been summarily removed and declared crazy; and, remembering the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

patience he had shown, his endurance of wrong, his alacrity to accept subordinate service, I could not fail seeing he had practised all he now advised.

The advice not to engage in controversy could have but one reference. On account of the discovery of an injurious indorsement by General Grant upon my official report of the battle of Shiloh, I had, in March, asked a court of inquiry, which Secretary Stanton refused on the ground that enough officers of rank to constitute the court under the Regulations could not be spared from duty. In this I again found the inconveniency of my rank. However, the demand for inquiry was still pending, and, if conceded, would lead to controversy in which all the burning disputes incident to the battle of Shiloh must be opened, and settled at least collaterally.<sup>1</sup> As my witnesses were living, I did not fear the consequences to myself; at the same time, there were reasons to make the business repugnant to both General Grant and General Sherman, rendering my employment by either of them an instance of extraordinary if not impossible generosity. With this in mind, regardful also of General Sherman's advice, I now addressed a note to Secretary Stanton requesting him to suspend action in the matter of the court until further communication; giving as motive of the request the possibility of satisfying General Grant upon the points involved, together with a desire to save further trouble. "Meantime," it was added, "I hope you will consider me ready and anxious to go to *any* duty."

In a second letter, dated Memphis, October 9, 1863, General Sherman informed me that he and General Grant had "had a full and frank conversation."

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. x., part i., p. 189.

"I explained to him," wrote Sherman, "the manner in which you came to open the subject to me, and that I had assured you that he, General G., entertained no unkind feelings. He went over many things, and then explained that so many new and young men had command of divisions and brigades that it would be unjust to deprive them." Speaking for himself, Sherman says: "I feel such is the case with me. It is very hard work for me to provide commands for my generals. I have now one major-general without command, and Hurlbut could not give a command to Prentiss."

So the attempt to get back to duty through General Sherman failed. Nevertheless, the delicacy with which he imparted the result was not without a soothing effect, while the concluding paragraph of his last letter went to my sympathy. "I lost my little boy here," he says—"the first death I have experienced in my family, and have been more overwhelmed by the event than I supposed possible."

My state mentally may be imagined. I had cast my last throw. What next?

The condition was one in which it would be easy for an untoward circumstance to throw me off my balance; and that was what happened. I received a note from Governor Morton informing me that I was authorized to report to him, and requesting me to do so. How had this come about? Who had taken the liberty of seeking such authority without my knowledge? And for what? I pushed inquiry at the governor, and found him the man. He had sent a telegram to Secretary Stanton, September 18th:

"General Lew Wallace's orders require him to remain at Crawfordsville. I respectfully request that they may be modified so far as to allow him to speak at such places



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

in this state as I may select. He can be of great assistance to me and our Cause. Please answer to-day.”<sup>1</sup>

Secretary Stanton replied the same day:

“General Lew Wallace is hereby authorized to report to you, and is at liberty to render you assistance in any part of the state.”<sup>2</sup>

My experiences with Governor Morton were fresh; through him I had lost my division in the Army of the Tennessee; I had served him twice, volunteering in disregard of my rank; he had seen me in degradation months and months, and sat silent when he might have saved me at the expense of a word spoken. It was too much, and I broke out in a telegram:

“CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA, *September 21, 1863.*

“*Hon. E. M. Stanton:*

“I never authorized anybody to apply to you to grant me permission to make speeches anywhere. The armies are moving, battles being fought. I am ashamed at being made to stay at home. How much more would I be ashamed to go about making speeches? For months past I have been your respectful beggar for duty in the field; I am so yet, and shall so continue. I decline reporting to Governor Morton.

“LEWIS WALLACE, Major-General.”<sup>3</sup>

The secretary took offence at the telegram, and, though I subsequently apologized to him, I did not report to Governor Morton.

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxx., part iii., p. 722.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 738.

*Ibid.*, p. 760.

LXVI

Given a command—Turning-point in military career—Interview with Lincoln—Stanton—Townsend—The Middle Department—Reverdy Johnson—Henry Winter Davis—Garrett—Baltimore—Military rule.

At last the long wait, the feverish impatience to be recognized and get to work, the mortifications in continuous series, the brutal trampling upon my pride came to an end. I was made glad by the receipt of an order which, as it marked a turning-point in the military part of my career, is given entire:

“(General Orders No. 97.)

“WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL’S OFFICE,  
“WASHINGTON, *March 12, 1864.*

“1. Major-General Lewis Wallace, U. S. Volunteers, is assigned to the command of the Eighth Army Corps, and of the Middle Department, exclusive of Fort Delaware. . . .

“E. D. TOWNSEND,  
“Assistant Adjutant-General.”<sup>1</sup>

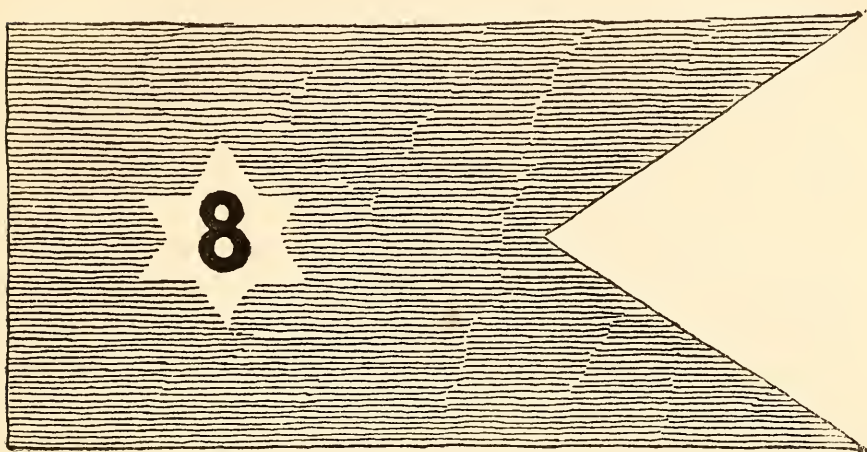
When at length I heard the particulars of how the order came about, I was all the more pleased. It was President Lincoln’s own suggestion—good enough in itself. Then, when I heard that General Halleck had called upon the President, and in person protested against the assignment, there was an added sweetness

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxiii., p. 671.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

to it so strong that my disappointment in not being sent to the field was at once and most agreeably allayed.

It is to be frankly admitted now that I was lamentably ignorant of the Middle Department, insomuch that I



FLAG OF THE EIGHTH ARMY CORPS

knew neither of what it was comprised nor where were its headquarters. And of the Eighth Army Corps, the shade covering the department lay in equal density over the corps. Fortunately, enlightenment upon these points lay in the War Office at Washington, and I hastened thither.

I made it my first duty in Washington to call upon President Lincoln and thank him for his kindness to me. Deeply and sincerely grateful, my expression of the feeling must have made an impression, for, coming near, he laid his large hand upon my shoulder and said, "I believed it right to give you a chance, Wallace."

I had not seen the President since the morning of the call, nearly two years before, when he told me he was about setting out for Harrison's Landing to keep McClellan from surrendering the army. Time and care had told upon him. His face was thinner and more

worn, and I thought the stoop he had brought with him from his home in Illinois more decided. Nevertheless, the smile with which he spoke and the certain indefinable cheeriness in his clear voice were winsome even more than ever, and they stayed with me. They are with me now.

He called me back from the door as I was going out.

"Ah, Wallace," he said, "I came near forgetting that there is an election nearly due over in Maryland, but don't *you* forget it. Good-bye."

Next I paid my respects to Secretary Stanton, whom I saw for the first time. When I passed into his office in the War Department unannounced, he was standing at a high desk writing. There were persons in waiting, some seated, some standing. The hush in the contracted chamber was chilling. One by one those in attendance were curtly dismissed; a performance on his part so illustrative of the secretary's manner, cold, sharp, blunt, decisive, not a moment of time lost, that the man's amazing unpopularity stood then and there explained to me. At the same time, I also saw how an intense desire to give himself to thought of great things thwarted by the continued demand of things small kept him in a state of incessant irritability—how responsibilities which he asked no man, not even Mr. Lincoln, to share, and anxieties that often embraced the whole continent had ruined a temper never of the sweetest. This much was certainly true—Mr. Stanton had not time to listen to argument or appeal, or to be amiable or courteous, and singular as it may seem, the mannerisms so offensive to the many actually made him indispensable to the President, who was his opposite in almost every point. These things I saw while in the office waiting my turn for the icy spraying of his reception. I saw them, and excused him. Grim and



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

insolent he might be; none the less in his abnegation of self, his indifference to applause—to everything in fact but duty, he was great, and I fell to admiring him.

The room cleared, he turned to me.

“You are—?”

“General Wallace,” I said, when in front of him.

“What do you want?”

“To see you, and pay my respects.”

“Well?”

“I am assigned to the Middle Department—”

“Oh yes, yes,” he said, as if struck by a remembrance slow in coming, and measuring me from head to foot.

“A moment—”

He rang a bell of such coarse note as to remind me of cows browsing in a Wabash River bottom. A man responded.

“Don’t let anybody in.”

The man bowed and withdrew.

“Come, let us sit down.” And with that the secretary took me to a lounge upholstered in leather, shiny with wear.

“What do you know of the Middle Department?” he asked.

I caught sight of a massive head crowned plentifully with dark hair, clear eyes nearly black, a ruddy face whiskered long and in iron-gray; then, after putting the points away in memory, I answered him.

“Nothing.”

“Nothing?” he repeated.

“I am from the West.”

“The department takes in Delaware, and all Maryland west to the Monocacy River, headquarters at Baltimore. You’ve been to Baltimore?”

“Only to pass through it.”

He raised his eyes to a smoky corner of the room, and pinched his lower lip with thumb and first finger.<sup>1</sup>

"Well," he then said, "perhaps you will be better of knowing nobody in the city. You see, that department has been a grave-yard for commanders. Ben Butler was the first, and he lost reputation there. Schenck—Bob Schenck, of Ohio—you know him?"

"Not personally."

"Well, Schenck was the last commander, and it had been better for him had he stayed away. He is in the city now, and I advise you to see him. You have seen the President?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did he tell you?"

"To come and see you."

"Was that all?"

"He also said there was an election nearly at hand in Maryland, and he did not want me to forget it."

"Nor must you." And with the words the secretary quit pinching his lip, while his face underwent a change. "It is this," he said, gravely. "The last Maryland legislature passed an act for an election looking to the abolition of slavery in the state by constitutional amendment. The President has set his heart on the abolition in that way; and mark, he don't want it to be said by anybody that the bayonet had anything to do with the election. He is a candidate for a second nomination. You understand?"

"I think so, sir. Anyhow, I want him renominated and elected."

"Have you a plan?"

"I never heard of the business before."

<sup>1</sup> In subsequent interviews I found this pinching a habit of the man, particularly when nonplussed.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Well, then, it is kindness saying it will be your first trial."

He arose with that and tried the sonority of the bell; and understanding the interview ended, I departed. Stopping in the doorway to bow, I saw the secretary at the desk, his back to me. If he heard my "Good-day, sir," he made no reply, not even looking at me.

It was a point of interest to know exactly the relation that would obtain between me and the Eighth Army Corps under the order assigning me to its command. For that I waited upon Adjutant-General Townsend, acquaintance with whom was but a little less important than with Secretary Stanton. He received me cordially. "The corps," he said, "is in a fragmentary condition, serving here and there, and you will not be troubled looking after it." I remember his adding, significantly: "You may be glad that such is the case. Your hands will be full enough without it."

Thereupon I plied the general with a request, that he would look through the assistants in his office, and find one whom he could recommend to me for an adjutant-general.

"If, as everybody seems to think, I am going down to trouble," I said, "I don't want it with you."

He laughed, and replied, "That's well done! I'll find you the right man."

And he made his promise good, as will be noticed fully further on.

Secretary Stanton had advised me to see General Schenck, the late commander of the Middle Department, and I called upon him.

"I knew your father," he said. "In 1842, or about that time, I went over to Indiana and helped him stump his congressional district." Speaking then to the pur-

pose that brought me to him, he entered into the affairs of the department, and gave me his experience in dealing with them.

"You ought to have no difficulty in governing there. It is all under martial law, town and country—even the Chesapeake Bay. The only limitations upon your sway are here in Washington. That is, Mr. Stanton is chief dictator. You will do the pulling, he the driving; and in his capacity of driver he is unreasonable and often viciously cruel."

"But he can always be consulted in advance," I suggested.

"Yes, it would look so, but don't—never! He hates the bother of consultation, and never commits himself beforehand. The initiative in everything, according to his idea, is yours—that is what you are put in command for. It is his to approve or condemn; his custom is to wait until the business is in mid-operation; then, if he speaks at all, it is in the shape of a special order of revocation. His approval is in his silence. Ben Butler is the only man he fears. Butler can do the most atrocious things—steal or murder—and be let alone. Butler is down at Norfolk, and will be your near neighbor." The general stopped to laugh, and then explained, "I always think of old Ben as a cross-eyed cuttle-fish swimming about in waters of his own muddying."

In some of the points touched upon by General Schenck there was much to disquiet as well as interest me.

"Stanton aside," he said, "your troubles will have origin altogether in Baltimore."

"Not the 'Plug-Uglies' and 'Blood-Tubs'?" I asked.

"Oh no! They are all on our side now. You see, Baltimore viewed socially is peculiar. There is more



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

culture to the square block there than in Boston—actual culture. The questions of the war divided the old families, but I was never able to discover the dividing line. Did I put a heavy hand on one of the Secessionists, a delegation of influential Unionists at once hurried to the President, and begged the culprit off. The most unfortunate thing in connection with the department and its management is that it is only a pleasant morning jaunt by rail from Baltimore to Washington. There is another thing you should know without being left to find it out experimentally: Baltimore is headquarters for a traffic in supplies for the rebel armies, the extent of which is simply incredible. It is an industry the men have nothing to do with; they know better, and leave it entirely to the women, who are cunning beyond relief, and bold on account of their sex. They invent underground lines too many and too subtly chosen to be picked up by the shrewdest detectives. Then"—the general said this with a fervor that led me to suspect he was speaking from some bitter experience—"when the fair culprits are caught, what is to be done with them? The President always lets them off. They promise him not to do so again, and come away laughing at the 'Old Ape.' Yes, what are you to do? What can be done?"

So far so good. Yet there was another point about which I was extremely solicitous. From study of trial juries in court, I had learned the secret of the government of the many by the few, and had been in the habit of applying it generally. So here; who were the strong, influential men of Baltimore? On this question I quietly addressed myself to disinterested parties in Washington, and had no difficulty in reaching a conclusion. Mr. Reverdy Johnston, United States Senator from Maryland, and Henry Winter Davis, member of

Congress, ruled the loyalists of the city almost despotically. Under them, adjutants, so to speak, were Judge Bond and Mr. Stockett Mathews, the latter because of his persuasive eloquence. Above them all, however, was Mr. John Garrett, who to the presidency of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad superadded an unapproachable genius for business. His word was good in the White House, and even better in the War Office. Mr. Stanton leaned upon him, knowing his loyalty and extraordinary ability. These were the men whom it was essential for me to know and win, if I could. As to society, it was unnecessary for me to look beyond Madame Bonaparte, in whom I had assurances of finding a loyal and noble-minded woman perfectly acquainted with the notables of the city, and on that account capable of advising me wisely and well.

At the end of a week's fishing for information in Washington respecting my new venture, I had a stock of ideas very useful to me, if only as a basis of confidence. One thing, however, my advisers had all omitted in their mention—the strategic value of Baltimore in the general scheme of war—its military value. I bought a Rand & McNally map of the United States, price fifteen cents, and attempted to satisfy myself on the point.

It took but a few minutes to reach a theory. Nothing could be plainer, it seemed to me, than that with Baltimore in the hands of an enemy there was an end to communication with Washington by land, whether from the north or west; because Baltimore was the meeting-place of the great railways, the Pennsylvania Central and the Baltimore & Ohio, without which the situation demanding haste, not a barrel of flour, not a company of infantry, not a gun could be rushed to the capital. In other words, Baltimore was the front gate

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

to Washington<sup>1</sup>—an idea, in my conception, definitive of the chief duty of a commander of the Middle Department. That is, if I held the city clear for the going and coming of troops and supplies, its social conditions and political government were but incidental issues, and there could be no just cause of complaint against me on the part of my military superiors.

With a feeling of readiness, I proceeded to Baltimore, taking rooms at the Eutaw House. Next day I called upon Brigadier-General Lockwood, temporarily in charge of the department, and, introducing myself, announced that I was prepared to relieve him of the command. From headquarters I then sent the following order to the newspapers for publication:

“(General Orders No. 16.)

“HEADQUARTERS MIDDLE DEPARTMENT, EIGHTH ARMY CORPS,  
“BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, *March 22, 1864.*

“In obedience to General Orders No. 97, War Department, adjutant-general's office, March 12, 1864, I hereby assume command of the Eighth Army Corps, and of the Middle Department, exclusive of Fort Delaware. . . . The department, as I am painfully aware, is crowded with perplexities, and for that reason I pray all good men residing in it to unite and give me their earnest support more for their own welfare than for mine.

“LEW WALLACE,  
“Major-General U. S. Volunteers.”

<sup>1</sup> It was upon this theory General Lee operated in his two campaigns north of the Potomac River. In both instances Washington was his ultimate object; but instead of driving straight at it, he moved primarily against Baltimore. See also *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxiii., p. 884.

LXVII

The election in Maryland—Formation of staff—Visit to the governor—Troops for the polls—Slavery abolished in Maryland by constitutional amendment—Letter from Henry Winter Davis.

“BUT don’t *you* forget it”—thus President Lincoln. And then Secretary Stanton—“It is kindness saying it will be your first trial.”

The matter referred to so strenuously had not been allowed to go to sleep in my mind, and I looked into it the first thing. The secretary’s terse description proved strictly correct—that is, the legislature of Maryland, by formal enactment, had provided for the holding of a general election, the issue being whether a convention should be called to amend the constitution of the state by a provision abolishing slavery. No mentor was needed to tell me why the affair was so alive in Mr. Lincoln’s heart; nor, to say truth, was I unwilling to be identified with the business, my old indifference to the existence of the institution having long since gone the way of my Democracy, making urgency such as I had received wholly superfluous.

But the means to the righteous end! April 6th was the day set for the election—or, in Mr. Stanton’s words, *of my first trial*. I had barely two weeks in which to operate. The discovery startled me.

That to be done had to be quickly—and I a stranger, and under hamper not to use the military. *That* restriction off, the work had been easy—but little more, in



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

fact, than a game of leap-frog. As it was, what could I do?

To decide, I must know more of the political status in the state than could be wrung from the newspapers. A private conference with two of the Republican leaders<sup>1</sup> disclosed that the densest secession counties were on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, and that elsewhere in the state the abolition sentiment was strong enough to take care of itself. To make sure, however, I gave General John R. Kenly, a most excellent gentleman and soldier, Maryland born, an escort of cavalry, and directed him to make a tour of both the shores, and report the conditions.

While waiting to hear from General Kenly, a gentleman appeared at headquarters with a letter of introduction from General Townsend, saying he had selected the bearer, Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel B. Lawrence, to serve me as adjutant-general, and that I would find him competent, trustworthy, and companionable.

The relationship thus begun I remember as one of the most agreeable of my life. Of the colonel personally, he showed his office habits in his face, which lacked the tan of the field. Brown-eyed and dark-haired, he wore no beard. He was slender in person, and graceful, scrupulously neat, and owner of a countenance that avouched him honest instantly one observed him. He became my intimate friend, and is such to this day. To his consummate management of the routine affairs of my headquarters, I gladly admit a great indebtedness. Indeed, I am not sure but that whatever success I achieved at Baltimore was his due quite as much as mine. He is now living in New York.

<sup>1</sup> Judge Bond and Mr. Mathews.

## LEW WALLACE

The coming of Colonel Lawrence enabled me to complete my staff, and publish it.

Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel B. Lawrence, Assistant Adjutant-General.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lynde Catlin, Assistant Inspector-General.

Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Bliss, Quartermaster.

Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph G. Crane, Commissary of Subsistence.

Lieutenant-Colonel John Woolley, Fifth Indiana Cavalry, Provost-Marshal.

Major James R. Ross, Aide-de-Camp.<sup>1</sup>

Major William M. Este, Aide-de-Camp.

Major Henry Z. Hayner, additional Aide-de-Camp.

Captain Maxwell V. Z. Woodhull, Aide-de-Camp.

Captain Dickinson P. Thurston, Aide-de-Camp.

Major Josiah Simpson, Surgeon United States Army, Medical Director.

Major C. C. Cox, Surgeon United States Army, Medical Purveyor.

Major H. W. Wharton, United States Army, Commissary of Musters.

Second Lieutenant Charles L. Isaacs, United States Volunteers, Acting Ordnance Officer.<sup>2</sup>

With the exception of Lawrence, Ross, and Woolley, they were all inherited, as it were, from General Schenck.

The casting about I did in connection with the approaching election was incessant, the problem being to get a majority of delegates in the convention friendly to the abolition amendment without subjecting the national administration to a charge of military intervention.

As doubtless already observed by the reader, the

<sup>1</sup> Brevet-Colonel, James R. Ross.

<sup>2</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxiii., p. 940.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

affair was not merely important in itself, and in the view and desires of the higher authorities in Washington, it was also so urgent in point of time that I became nervous. And then occurred a circumstance so strange, and at the same time such an apt illustration of the submerging effect of war, civil war in especial, that my feeling is to accompany its mention with an earnest avowal of its truth.

In all the talk and discussions I had heard about my department and the states of which it was composed, no one had reminded me that there was a civil governor in residence at Annapolis named A. W. Bradford. I do not remember now who first referred to his existence, but I at once asked if he were loyal, and had for answer "Nobody knows." Further inquiry brought it out that none of my predecessors had paid the governor the smallest attention, not even calling upon him.

Here was a chance for me!

I summoned my entire staff, and bade them get ready all their war toggery, swords, sashes, chapeaux, epaulets, spurs; for I would wait upon his excellency, Governor Bradford, in Annapolis, taking a special train. Their presence was essential to the completeness of the visit.

In explanation now: on file in the office petitions had been found from voting precincts down the bay asking for troops on election day—all, of course, from Union men. Help? Yes, yes; unfortunately in every one of the documents I saw the prohibited bayonet in plain projection. What was to be done? Perhaps—and there was a whole world of relief in the thought—perhaps—possibly the governor might be a Union man, and then—well, I would go down and sound him.

We halted at the door of the executive office in the old state-house at Annapolis, and I sent the governor

my card inscribed somewhat impressively with my name and title, underwritten for the occasion with—"and staff."

There was surprise in the executive office when the card was delivered, followed by not a little excitement as we marched in. The arrival whisked through the building, and was of such electrical effect that before the introductions and hand-shaking were through a respectable audience had assembled. And why not? It had been a long time, they told me, since the shadows of the ancient room had been so disturbed by gold-fire and sword-clang.

The governor, a plain, farmer-like, undemonstrative person, held himself well under guard, as became a chief of one of the original colonies. I asked him, when the opportunity came round, for a few words in private, and, being led into an adjoining room, referred to the pending election, and gave him some of the petitions that had reached me praying for troops at the polls. After he had examined them, I put the interrogatory: "*If, fast as such petitions come to me, I send them properly indorsed to you, governor, what will you do with them?*"

Then I waited, doing my best to hide the intensity of interest I felt in his answer.

He took a moment, given, I think, to a form of reply.

"Mail all petitions of the kind to me," he said, with singular directness, "and I will return them to you with my official request that you send troops as prayed. The matter is really within my province, and I thank you for recognizing the fact." He added, presently, "I only want to make sure that the papers you forward to me are in good faith."

It is of easy inference now how the election went. Upon petitions, referred to the governor, troops were sent to every doubtful precinct in the state, *but always*



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

*upon his written request.* In most instances the sight of the "blue-coated hirelings" a mile away, so enraged the Secessionists they refused to go to the polls. In due time, of course, the convention was held, and slavery abolished by formal amendment of the constitution.<sup>1</sup>

That this success was appreciated will appear from acknowledgments. Here, for instance, is a letter from Henry Winter Davis, of whom I have already spoken. In Maryland the Republican leadership unquestionably belonged to him, and I knew President Lincoln was particularly anxious to propitiate him.

*"Thursday Evening.*

"MY DEAR GENERAL,—I have the returns before me, and I cannot go to bed before thanking you for your sympathy and aid in the great cause over whose triumph you are so fortunate as to preside.

"It is now done; and Maryland will always remember that you did not allow the weight of the United States to be thrown in the scales of the slave power.

"Your name is associated forever with a cause more enduring than that of many a stricken field—that of free institutions and their consolidation forever.

"Now freedom in Maryland is sure, and you will be no longer troubled on this score. I trust all your anxieties will now be confined to dealing with *rebels*—we have no copperheads in Maryland—every one is a traitor or Unionist—and that soon the rebellion will be as prostrate everywhere as its *cause* is in Maryland.

"I should have called to pay my respects on Wednesday, but was too much hurried.

"You managed Bradford to a marvel. Bond and Sterling were delighted. When I am at home I hope to add my voice to the chorus of their eulogies.

"Sincerely yours,

"H. WINTER DAVIS."

<sup>1</sup> As to the details of my management, see General Kenly's report.—*War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxiii., p. 826.

LEW WALLACE

In the latter part of the month I received a visiting-card so small as to be slipped conveniently in a vest pocket, the vogue in that day. It contained a request.

Will Gen. Wallace call  
and see me?

A. LINCOLN.

The first train took me to Washington, and I hurried to the White House. The president received me most cordially.

"I sent for you," he said, "to say that I watched the boiling of the kettle over in Maryland, and I think you managed it beautifully. It was a good thing, that getting Governor Bradford between you and the enemy here in Congress. Winter Davis is happy over it. Keep right along now, and get Davis and the governor together. And—yes, yes—be fair, but whenever there is a doubt with a benefit in it, don't fail to give the benefit where it will do the most good. You'll do it, I know. That's a good fellow. Now go and see Stanton—or wait, and I will give you a note to him."

I transcribe the note, it is so characteristic:

"EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,  
WASHINGTON, March 31, 1864.

"*Hon. Secretary of War:*

"General Wallace has been with me, and I think he is getting along with the matter we wished to see him for very satisfactorily. It is a great point, which he seems to be effecting, to get Governor B. and Hon. H. W. D. together. I have told him to be fair, but to give the benefit of all

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

doubts to the emancipationists. Please confer with him, and add any suggestions that may occur to you.

"Yours truly,

"A. LINCOLN."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Stanton, when I delivered the note, shook my hand warmly, saying: "It was well done. They can't say now that *we* used the bayonet in the election. If the governor did, that's a different thing. Nobody will deny his right to use it."

<sup>1</sup> This note, together with one from President Garfield, and another from President Harrison, now hangs framed on the east wall of my study. Addressed to Mr. Stanton, it of course belonged to him; but as I was leaving, I asked him to give it to me, and he was pleased to do so.

LXVIII

Martial law in Baltimore—Women smugglers—An arrest—The punishment and its effects—Seizure of the Maryland Club-house, as a refuge for negro women—The slave girl—The fine.

FROM the election, thus satisfactorily disposed of, I turned next to the government of Baltimore.

I arranged a conference with the mayor—Swan, as now recollected—and had no trouble getting him to come to my suggestion. We agreed, in the first place, that the soldiery in the city, passing through or in permanent assignment, were to be regarded as a foreign element which it were best to leave under military control. Starting from that point, arrangement was simple.

Civil government continued with the mayor exactly as in time of peace. Then the guardianship of the city was divided between the regular chief of police and Colonel Woolley, my provost-marshal; the former exercising control from sunrise to sunset, and the latter from sunset to sunrise.

In every ward there were details of provost guardsmen in stations and forbidden the streets, but ready instantly to support the police. After sundown they issued from the stations, and all night long silently patrolled the streets.

Under this arrangement it was wonderful how well the peace of the city was kept—how safe all order-loving people were, whether in their houses or abroad. So much at least will be granted me, I think, by all who



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

have remembrance of the time; though in the claim I do not credit myself with the execution of the scheme—that belongs to Colonel Woolley and the chief of police, whose name I am sorry to have forgotten.

In a short time the administration of city affairs began running smoothly and quietly; but as the two or three exceptional incidents may afford some amusement, I will give them.

From what has been said, it would seem my friend, General Schenck, had found a disturbing element in the secession ladies of Baltimore, and in some way suffered from it. His description of them, and the emphasis with which he had dwelt upon their remarkable talent for mischief in general, I accepted as a warning, and stood upon my guard.

A measure in avoidance was slow coming, but it did come. In the unwinding of criminal conspiracies which engaged me in the years I had served society and the state as prosecuting attorney, I discovered the unwillingness and dislike, sometimes positive fear, with which persons moving in the execution of dangerous designs give their confidence, especially to such as might be opposed to them in interest. Acting upon this principle, I had a railing erected across the hall up-stairs of our headquarters, and at the gate of entrance posted Colonel Ross, the handsomest and best-mannered officer of my staff. The colonel's orders were to intercept all women asking to see the general commanding, and learn from them the nature of their business with him. Getting it, he was to report, and the general was to decide whether the visitor should be admitted; if she refused his request, the colonel was to turn her away.

For a short time Colonel Ross's duties were arduous indeed; he had arguments and quarrels, in instances he was threatened, yet he survived. At length his trouble

ceased. Women without business or with business of doubtful kind, generally for passes to cross the line south, quit coming to headquarters. Whereupon we congratulated ourselves. We were banned, but safe. I was not niggardly in my thanks to General Schenck.

Every one into whose hands these memoirs may fall will see almost of his own suggestion how necessary it was that, of the inhabitants of the city, I should know who were disloyal with more certainty even than who were loyal; of the latter there was nothing to fear, while of the former there was at least everything to suspect. We knew communication with the enemy across the line was unceasing; that interchange of news between Richmond and Baltimore was of daily occurrence; that there were routes, invisible to us, by which traffic in articles contraband of war was carried on with singular success, almost as a legitimate commerce—routes by water as well as by land. General Butler, at Norfolk, exerted himself to discover the traders operating by way of the Chesapeake Bay, but without success; with a like result I tried to unearth the landward lines. Captain Smith, my chief of detectives, a man of ability and zeal, at last brought me proof incontestable that Baltimore was but a way-side station of the nefarious commerce, the initial points of active transaction centring in Philadelphia.

As to Baltimore, this simplified our task, and shortly General Schenck's sagacity was again vindicated—those working in the prohibited business were ladies who moved in the upper circles of society.

Should I arrest the fair sympathizers? What was the use? The simple appearance of distress was enough with the president; and if that were so with a man in concernment, what would it be with a woman? In sight of the hopelessness of effort on my part, over

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and over, again and again, in the night often as in the day, I took counsel of myself, "What can be done?" At last an answer came to me, and in a way no one could have dreamed—the purest of chances.

A woman in high standing socially alighted from a carriage at the Camden Street station of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, carrying a mysterious-looking box. At the moment she was stepping into a car my chief of detectives arrested her. The box being opened, there, in velvet housings, lay a sword of costly pattern inscribed for presentation to Colonel ——, a guerilla officer of Confederate renown.

A commission was immediately ordered for the woman's trial. The sword and the inscription upon it were irrefutable proofs of guilt, and she was sent to a prison for females in Massachusetts. The affair was inexcusably gross, considering the condition of war—so much, I think, will be generally conceded—still, seeking the moral effect of the punishment alone, I specially requested the officials of the institution not to subject the offender to humiliation beyond the mere imprisonment. In a few days she was released and brought home. The sword I presented to Captain Smith.

The case, of course, gave forth a great noise; but thereafter, as I had hoped, the feminine sympathizers of the city ceased their troubling—at least, I never heard from them again.

Two other instances of tyranny may be mentioned, if only because much was sought against me in their account.

Directly that constitutional freedom in Maryland was proclaimed, the newly liberated, shaken off by many of their masters, and not knowing where to go or what else to do, toiled up in bewildered hundreds to Baltimore—men, women, and children. Their presence on

the streets made itself observed, and became a subject of complaint. The police stations filled with them, and presently the mayor invited me to help him; they were starving, and he had no funds with which to care for them. The situation, really extraordinary, called for prompt action, and I buckled to it heroically.

Inquest was first made of the asylums—city, county, and state, public and private—and finding no accommodations in them for the wretched strangers, I could see but one thing to do. The hubbub it would raise would reach to Washington; but there was nothing else in sight—nothing, at least, that I could see.

For a long time back—how long, I do not know—there had been in Baltimore a Maryland Club famous for its wealth, cuisine, liquors, and hospitality—this in ante-bellum days. The roar of the famous first gun at Sumter, however, entered its doors, and, dividing its members and patrons, it sank into a secession incubator. Such I found it. Unionists were not welcome there; far from that, I had repeated complaints of insult and discourtesy lodged with me from such of them as ventured to try it.

The club-house happened to be eligibly situated, conveniently arranged, handsomely furnished—all by report, since I had never set foot in it—and though in style somewhat antiquated within and without, it also suited the new demand upon the city better than any other I could find. The kitchen with its great cooking-range seemed especially desirable. In short, I took possession of the house, and, putting it in charge of an officer of my own selection, before the week was out four or five hundred negro women refugees, with their children, were in enjoyment of its luxurious shelter—



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

women, be it observed—only women unable to go out and, like the men, seek employment.<sup>1</sup>

The audacity of this proceeding must be admitted. It was a rude invasion of what in the estimation of every disloyal gentleman habituated to the privileges of the club was a social sanctuary; and how many of their associates, Union in profession, would share their view of the action might not be anticipated. I was called to Washington to explain. Enough, I think, that my command remained to me, while my Freedmen's Bureau went on without interruption. Of such in Maryland as still bear me ill will, I beg pardon. After so many years it may be possible to get them to look at the necessities of the situation in which I was placed. That any of them can be brought to see the charity to which their property so practically contributed may be doubted.

As this incident had connection with the old institution so wisely voted out of existence in Maryland, so did the second. Besides the interest the latter may excite, it will be serviceable as an illustration of the brutality slavery made possible. *Made possible*, I say; for I would not in any manner fortify the idea sought to be conveyed that all owners of slaves were monsters of cruelty and wrong.

The ratification of the new constitution was not only bitterly opposed; some of the late owners resorted to various schemes to get round the prohibition after its formal proclamation. Indeed, so persistent were they that in November I was driven to the issuance of an

<sup>1</sup> This was about the time General Howard founded his Freedmen's Bureau in Washington. Whether mine was set up before his I cannot say; I rather think it was. I am sure mine was in operation considerably prior to the completion of the buildings Congress voted him for his use. Mr. Lossing, in his *Civil War in America*, credits me with the priority.

order by which all persons within the limits of the Middle Department theretofore slaves were taken under special military protection.

Among the recent chattels in the Baltimore Freedmen's Bureau, formerly the Maryland Club-house, converted, there was one from Anne Arundel County, a handsome mulatto girl not more than nineteen, named Maggy, or Margaret, Toogood. The owner—I am sorry to have forgotten his name—followed her to the city, and, to repossess himself, charged the poor creature with larceny; upon the strength of which he was allowed to carry her back to his plantation, ostensibly to hold her for prosecution. He then dismissed the legal proceeding; whereupon the girl was, to all intents, again his slave. To keep her securely, he went to a country blacksmith in the vicinity and got him to make a chain and fit it around her neck, secured permanently by a lock of peculiar construction, impossible of opening except by the key, its special complement.

This story, I grant, sounds incredible; but often as I incline to doubt it, the identical chain, less only the key of the lock, is upon the mantel in my house, a lasting and horrible reminder of how I came to be possessed of it.

It was in this way: I heard of the girl's condition, and sent some cavalry to bring her and her master to me. The scene when the two were produced in my headquarters equalled anything of the kind in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; for it was an actuality beyond taint of fancy, an actuality of occurrence under my eyes, and, like all *facts*, above gainsaying. He throughout was defiant and ugly, and stood loud of tongue upon what he termed his legal rights.

The first thing was to take the chain off. To do that the girl had to be sent to a blacksmith's shop. Upon

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the return I took the chain. It was of nine links, each two and a half inches long, and rough from the forge. In length it covered seventeen inches, and, with the lock, weighed about four pounds. This badge of servitude, with nothing between it and the skin of the woman, she had worn night and day for full seven weeks, until the skin at the back of the neck and over the collar-bones became callous. Let one give a minute to imagining the torture inflicted and endured.

What did I do?

Well, gentle reader, I do not think I did too much.

The girl I sent back to the Bureau. Of the man I asked, "You own the plantation you live on?"

"Yes," he said.

"Very good. Now you must pay five hundred dollars to Colonel Crane, of my staff, in trust for this girl. The colonel is a bonded officer, responsible for the money, and for its right application. And you must provide for the payment before you leave my office."

The man, in a white heat, sprang up and swore roundly he would not.

The case was not one to admit of argument.

"We will see." And to Colonel Woolley, I said, "Take this person to the city jail, and have him kept there until he has changed his mind."

The master answered, loudly, "I will rot before I pay a dollar."

"And, colonel," I subjoined, "see he is kept at hard labor."

About two weeks afterwards a note was brought me from the prisoner, respectfully worded, and saying he was willing to pay the money as directed.

And it was paid.

Flattering myself now that enough has been given to enable those of the present generation to understand

## LEW WALLACE

the business of the department, and how it was carried on, I will stop for a short chapter of acknowledgments, then go to incidents entirely different in character and of much greater importance—all, however, of occurrence while I was yet in command.



## LXIX

Social life in Baltimore—Madame Bonaparte---The Bonaparte room  
—The bust of Napoleon.

It may have been observed that nothing is said in the preceding chapters about my social relations while in the military governorship of Baltimore. So I stop a moment to protest against allowing it to go to inference that I was an exception to the hospitable rule of the city. The attentions received, while offered more frequently than time would permit me to accept, were, it is true, from the loyal class altogether. It would have been strange indeed had I looked for courtesies from the other class, who naturally regarded me as their enemy, and still stranger had I courted them. I went about the streets on foot unarmed and unattended at all hours of the day; yet in no instance was I subjected to insult or incivility; a circumstance to be taken, I think, as an admission that they knew I was doing my best to take care of such of them as acknowledged the situation by behaving themselves—and they were of the many.

I would not be invidious; still, while on the social theme, there were those whose entertainments live in my memory with singular distinctness. Among them were the Shoemakers, about whom all the conditions were such as to enable them to excel in the amenities for which some persons have undoubtedly a genius denied to others. The day was also that of John P. Kennedy, whom it is as little possible for Baltimoreans

to forget as the giver of good dinners and a perfect host generally as that he wrote "Horse Shoe Robinson" and had been a member of a presidential cabinet. Then it were most unpardonable if, in this hour of acknowledgment long delayed, I passed Madame Bonaparte in silence. She was not merely devoted to the Union, but wondrous wise in her devotion. Her goodness to me was remarkable for its motherliness. She knew the difficulties of the department, yet had a genuine concern that I should succeed in its management. This I was at a loss to understand until one day she told me, with tears in her eyes, that I kept her reminded of her boy Jerome, in Paris, attending the emperor. It is often difficult distinguishing between maternal love and maternal ambition; nevertheless, I thought she meant by the remark to express a preference that he, a soldier graduated at West Point, and who had brought out of the Crimean War a record unusually brilliant, should be at home bearing his part in this war, far greater in battles and proportionately richer in glory.

In the Bonaparte mansion there was a room—I suppose it is still maintained—set apart specially for relics of the great Napoleon — a kind of gallery rich with medallions, prints, wood-cuts, and pictures of the Conqueror and his family, giving him to be seen in all epochs of his wonderful life from baby to master of Europe. Among the marbles I call to mind a bust of him. Upon his setting-out for Egypt it will be remembered he took with him a corps of savans and artists, the chosen of France. One of the latter, a young man, modelled Napoleon. This was in Cairo, during the campaign against the Mamelukes. With his own hand he carved it, and died. The bust was lost many years, but eventually discovered and brought to Paris, where it was once copied, this one being that copy. It repre-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sented the subject in the uniform of the period, laced and braided, and collared so stiff and high it must have been inconvenient if not torturous. Above the collar shone the head and face—the head bare, and with hair long and not parted, but docked squarely across the forehead; the face thin and beardless, with hollow cheeks, the nose of a hawk, the chin of a despot, the eyes sunken and dreamy, gazing at things afar and yet to come—eyes that fixed a beholder exactly as the Sphinx must have fixed him, inspiring thoughts of the insolvable, like destiny. Standing before it, one found himself asking, “How much of the man was preternatural? How far through the future is he seeing? Can it be that across the fields of Austerlitz and Wagram he has caught sight of Moscow, and Leipsic, and the final horror—Waterloo?”

I doubt if any one ever stood before that bust with a livelier appreciation of the privilege than possessed me; and my gratitude to Madame Bonaparte was measured by the appreciation. “Will General Bonaparte see me to-day?” I would ask her. Whereupon she would show me to the sanctuary and say, with a gracious smile, “He will see you alone.” And therewith she would retire.

As it was possible to be more than comfortable at the Eutaw House, my wife came up to pass the time with me, bringing our little boy. I bought a pony for him; and he rode with me daily, making me very proud to see how naturally the handsome lad took to the saddle, and how well he became it.

LXX

The invasion of Maryland — John W. Garrett — The situation — Hunter's movements — Washington exposed — The Shenandoah Valley — General Grant — Halleck — General Wallace leaves Baltimore for the front — Disposition of his command.

THE incident now reached will be conceded, I think, to have been the most trying, and, in point of service rendered, the most important of my life. It was a battle—and more, a battle given upon my own judgment and responsibility, without an order from any of my superiors or their knowledge. Such being the case, an anxiety to have it thoroughly understood is but natural; and with that object I will presume to treat it circumstantially, omitting no essential detail. By so doing, moreover, my obligations to the brave men living and dead who bore the brunt with me, and intelligently accepted the hazards while, like myself, hopeless of victory, will be more completely discharged.

*The First Warning*

About July 2, 1864, Mr. John W. Garrett, president of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, called at my headquarters in the city. I had come to admire him very much, and, knowing him to have little time for mere sociability, always received his calls as significant of important business, bracing myself accordingly. On this occasion he told me his agents at stations between Cumberland and Harper's Ferry had notified him of



the appearance of detachments of Confederate troops, and as such appearances theretofore had been precursors of serious operations in the Shenandoah Valley, he anticipated trouble.

"You know," he said, "there are no troops at Washington—at least not much more than enough to enable General Auger to keep the peace in the city?"

As he spoke interrogatively, I answered, "Yes, there are tremendous fortifications about the place, with only a few post-guards to take care of them."

"Well," he continued, "I have apprehensions, and they have set me to thinking. Now, why can't you and General Auger unite in looking after the district of country between Harper's Ferry and Monocacy Junction?"

"That is not badly thought, Mr. Garrett; but," I said, "there are two things that make it impossible for me to be voluntarily a party to the scheme. First, I have no cavalry, and, in the next place, the Monocacy River is the western limit of my department. All beyond it belongs to General Hunter, and I wouldn't like to provoke the monster of military jealousy. You know it is just as green-eyed with us to-day as it used to be with the Greeks before Troy."

Discussion followed, of course, and as I saw how greatly he was concerned by the threatened danger to his road, as well as the exposure of Washington, I was led, towards the close of the interview, into making him a promise.

"It is very clear," I said, "that your iron bridge over the river at the Monocacy Junction is essential to communication with Harper's Ferry, and as I have a block-house, with two guns in it, on the eastern bank covering the bridge, I will assume guardianship of the structure from my end of it to the other. You may

take with you my promise—the bridge shall not be disturbed without a fight. Only keep me posted that I may get there in time.”

This was spoken lightly, for I had not the faintest idea of ever being called on to make the undertaking good. Possibly he knew more than he was pleased to disclose to me.

Mr. Garrett’s seriousness impressed me. He had apprehensions, he said. Of what was he apprehensive? Why his anxiety to have the country between Harper’s Ferry and Monocacy Junction cared for so particularly? The iron bridge over the Monocacy was an expensive structure, certainly; but my block-house covered it, and I had two companies of infantry in the house, with two guns, one of them a twenty-four-pounder howitzer. He knew that. Then my conjecture took a broader range, turning upon his remark about the nakedness of Washington. Could Washington be in danger? How—and from whom? I brought out the map, my usual resource when assailed by the otherwise unintelligible, as in this case, and, by conning the situation, tried to draw out and study the threatening possibilities, if such really existed.

### *The Situation*

To Mr. Garrett, speaking of the defences of Washington, I had used the word *tremendous*, and the sound of it in the ear of a reader of the present day may seem a gross exaggeration. But let us see.

In 1864 my knowledge of the fortifications of the city was general, but by no means of the true approximate. One beautiful day in the preceding year I had undertaken, in company with a military friend, to make the grand round of the forts and accessory works comprising the system which, for a good reason, was not to be

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

studied from published maps. We put our horses on a ferryboat, and, landing at Alexandria, began with Fort Lyons. Noon overtook us at Fort Allen, the grim guardian of the chain-bridge across the Potomac above Georgetown. There we had accomplished about one-third of the proposed journey, and, being hungry, concluded we had seen enough. So we quit and adjourned for oysters and coffee.

These works, in comparison with which those of Richmond were the merest castle-building of children, were held, according to the outside information at the time—mine in common with the public—by not to exceed eight or nine thousand uninstructed men; while in Washington and Georgetown, quartered here and there, the same uncertain *on dit* allowed about as many more, of whom a majority were invalids and convalescents. That is to say, eight or nine thousand inefficients were in the works proper, ready upon alarm to take to the guns and do the duty of forty thousand trained specialists, supported by a medley so half-pledged and shadowy as to be a delusion and snare to everybody not an enemy.

Washington, seriously menaced, was incapable of self-defence—that much was clear.<sup>1</sup>

I looked next for what of protection for the city there might be outlying in the direction of Richmond. The first thing to challenge observation there was the De-

<sup>1</sup> In 1871 General J. G. Barnard, colonel of engineers, to whom the system of defences under consideration was due, published an official report from which I extract figures worth noting in connection with the text.

In the whole system, he says, there were 53 forts and 22 batteries, all within a perimeter of 37 miles. The armament mounted was 643 guns and 73 mortars. For all this there were required 25,000 infantrymen and 9000 artillerymen, with 3000 cavalry for outpost duty—37,000 in all.

partment of West Virginia, General David Hunter commanding. After relieving General Franz Sigel, formerly in charge, General Hunter had assembled the troops, forty thousand and more—all, in fact, but about ten thousand—and gone off campaigning against Lynchburg, far down in the southwestern region of old Virginia. And of the ten thousand left him with which to keep the railroad between Harper's Ferry and Cumberland intact, Sigel could put into line not more than six thousand effectives. Or in simplest words, there were in observation in the Shenandoah Valley barely six thousand troops available for the defence of Washington.

But Hunter—where was he? He had set out in his grand campaign in the latter part of May; and here it was July. I had heard of him victorious at Piedmont; then at Lexington, where he burned the famous Military Institute; then at Lynchburg, victorious again. After that, nothing. Leaving me assured of but one thing of pertinency to my inquest—the probabilities were he was not where he could help should the enemy move against Washington in force.

I saw then why Mr. Garrett was apprehensive. All the gateways of the Shenandoah Valley—its roads, passes, gaps—were standing wide open, with Washington exposed, its very nakedness inviting attack. I saw the situation with shuddering distinctness. What an opportunity for General Lee! In sight of two hopes—*chances* would probably be the better term—I presently quieted down. First, Lee, absorbed in defending Richmond, and put to about all he knew, might not see the opportunity. Or, if he saw it, there was an accounting to be had with General Grant.

This latter remark needs explanation; and I give it the more willingly because it enables me to submit one of the highest and most incontestable proofs of what I



consider the now thoroughly developed practical genius for war possessed by General Grant.

Few things in connection with the struggle of the Rebellion are better known than President Lincoln's persistent objection always sturdily urged against any and every line of offensive operation the prosecution of which might subject Washington to a possible counter-attack. McClellan, Burnside, Hooker, all willingly or unwillingly yielded to the protest. Then Grant came, and the objection was mysteriously dropped, leaving it to be said that the good president had met a superior personality and succumbed to it.

This I happen to know was signally unjust to both the men. The fact was, General Grant explained his scheme of operation to Mr. Lincoln. Setting out from Washington direct, if he found the effort too costly, he would change base to City Point, on the James River, moving by his left flank. Such a change would uncover Washington; that was foreseen, and provided for in this manner: the Shenandoah Valley being the only route by which the enemy could come from the south against the city, a force would be left in observation there. Instantly upon report of danger, relief could be drawn from City Point; for which transports sufficient to carry an army, if such were the need, would be kept under banked fires ready for quick movement. Thirty-six or forty hours being ample to make the passage, it was argued that the enemy having to go afoot would stand but small chance in a race.

The scheme presented an excellent showing. Its one weakness lay in getting timely notice of peril; and out of that grew the assignment of General Halleck, chief of staff, with headquarters in Washington. As trusted sentinel upon a high tower, General Halleck was to keep General Grant advised of the military situa-

tion generally, and of that of Washington in especial. The plan was approved by Lincoln; insomuch that subsequently he permitted the assemblage in and about City Point of the bulk of the armies east.

Knowing all this, and believing that Sigel, with outpost at Winchester, if not farther up the Shenandoah Valley, would hasten to wire General Halleck of the appearance of an enemy in force, and that Halleck in turn would be as quick to speed the alarm to General Grant, I tried to dismiss the matter. Possibly, in great anxiety for the safety of his railroad, Mr. Garrett might have been unnecessarily excited. In this effort to get the troublesome subject out of mind the reflection most helpful to the result sought was that being so far behind the front, shift as it might, it was not at all likely to reach and involve me or my department.

### *The Second Warning*

Next morning, the 3d, I was at my desk earlier than usual. Calling Colonel Lawrence in, I asked if he had any news of the whereabouts of General Hunter. He had none, he said, unless newspaper rumors could be called news.

"What of them?" I inquired.

"Only that General Hunter had crossed into the Kanawha Valley."

Spreading the map out—"See here," I said. "Hunter in the Kanawha Valley means the Shenandoah Valley open clear down to Winchester; if so, what shall hinder General Lee from drawing large detachments from General Grant by threatening Washington or seriously attempting its capture?"

"Nothing," the colonel replied. "Nothing, if he sees the opportunity."

And to that I returned: "He is reckoned among the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

great soldiers, and it will not do to count upon his not seeing the opportunity. Besides," I added, "I think Mr. Garrett believes there is a Confederate force coming this way now."

Then I told the colonel of the interview with Mr. Garrett, and asked, "What do you say?"

"Mr. Garrett is a serious man," he replied.

"Well, colonel, I have come early to go over the returns with you analytically and carefully, to see what troops the department can spare if demand is made upon me. I would like to be ready."

The task we then assumed was not an easy one. All Maryland from the Monocacy River to the Chesapeake Bay, and beyond to the sea, with Delaware, made a comprehensive charge, to keep which the small total of troops left me by General Grant was many times divided and widely distributed.<sup>1</sup> And what might be taken had to be without exposure of the localities the commands were holding. In fine, the operation was like gleaning in a lean field a second and third time. It took us till noon; and when we were through, the following was the best we could do:

Third Regiment, Maryland, Potomac Home Brigade, Colonel Charles Gilpin; Eleventh Maryland Infantry, Colonel Landstreet; seven companies of the One Hundred and Forty-ninth Ohio National Guard, Colonel Allison L. Brown, and three companies of the One Hundred and Forty-fourth Ohio National Guard, to be temporarily consolidated under Colonel Brown; four companies of the First Regiment, Maryland, Potomac Home Brigade, Captain Brown; Maryland Battery, Captain Alexander.

<sup>1</sup> A reader curious to learn exactly of what my command consisted at this time is referred to *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part i., p. 573.

## LEW WALLACE

Small as this force was, it is to be remarked that the Eleventh Maryland and all the Ohio men were "hundred days'" troops, and that the whole thus selected did not exceed in number twenty-three hundred effectives.

Returning to the office promptly after dinner, I was met by Colonel Lawrence at the head of the stairs.

"Here," he said, "what do you think of this?"

He showed excitement—something unusual with him. Taking the telegram he offered, I read:

"MARTINSBURG, July 4, 1864.

*"General Lew Wallace, Baltimore, Maryland :*

"I have reports of an advance of the enemy in force down the Shenandoah Valley. His advance is at Winchester.

F. SIGEL, Major-General."

"This looks as if we had work ahead of us, colonel. The notice is timely, at least, and I will act on it."

With that I took the colonel into my office, and we made rough draughts of orders as follows:

*"To General John R. Kenly, Commanding the Third Separate Brigade :*

"Get and hold seven companies of the One Hundred and Forty-ninth Ohio ready for instant movement. Also Alexander's battery."

*"To General E. B. Tyler, at the Relay House, Commanding the First Separate Brigade :*

"Hold your entire command in readiness to move, with three days' rations and a hundred rounds of ammunition to the man."

To Colonel Root, at Annapolis, a like order respecting six companies of Ohio militia and Company I, First Eastern Shore Maryland Volunteers.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The same day, upon second thought, I wired General Tyler to proceed in person to Monocacy Junction, taking his entire command, reserving only enough of the Eleventh Maryland (ordered to report to him) as would suffice to replace the Third Maryland withdrawn from the Relay House. The command he was to drop at Monrovia, a village a few miles east of the Monocacy Junction, with exception of two companies with which he was to reinforce the two companies already in the block-house at the Junction, and assist in construction of rifle-pits, and insuring a protracted resistance in case of attack. If the post were attacked, and a successful resistance possible by the force at Monrovia, he was to order to the Junction; if the force were insufficient, he being the judge, he was not to take any risk there, but retire in the direction of the Relay House on the Baltimore pike. From the Junction he was to send out scouts and do what he could in obtaining information of the enemy.

General Tyler took train in the night of July 3d, and dropping his men at Monrovia, reached Monocacy Junction with the two reinforcing companies; after which there was nothing for me to do but await developments.

The second warning was not lost upon me.

### *The March of Events*

Next day (the 4th) I telegraphed General Halleck:

"I have concentrated troops equal to two regiments of infantry at Monrovia; have strong guard at Monocacy Junction, and to-morrow will have two regiments and two batteries available at Baltimore. I am doing all I can to concentrate my command."

With that telegram I forwarded a report from Major-General Couch, addressed to me from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania:

"Martinsburg has been evacuated, and General Sigel is falling back towards Harper's Ferry, and enemy moving towards Williamsport. General Weber at Harper's Ferry also reports the enemy at ten to twenty thousand, consisting of infantry and artillery."

Also a telegram from General Tyler, at Monocacy Junction:

"Sigel is reported marching from Shepherdstown to Harper's Ferry. The enemy's strength is extravagantly reported. It would be folly to give figures."<sup>1</sup>

I think it will be seen by the most thoughtless reader that by this time the warmth of the situation was intensifying rapidly.

Yet later (3.30 P.M.) I telegraphed Adjutant-General Townsend:

"Telegram just received from Gettysburg of this date says, 'Rebels are in Hagerstown in force coming down the valley.'"

And then at 3.50 P.M. to General Halleck:

"Weber was attacked at 10 A.M.; he will probably have to withdraw to Maryland side, if he has not already. Sigel and Mulligan are falling back to Harper's Ferry on the Maryland side, but will probably arrive too late.

<sup>1</sup> The reader will understand that in these details, impossible to the memory, I am writing assisted by the *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., parts i. and ii.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

There must be two columns, one operating by way of Hagerstown, the other against Harper's Ferry."

Again to General Halleck a telegram from General Tyler, at Monocacy, two o'clock:

"Telegraphic communication cut west of Frederick. Operator at Point of Rocks says the enemy have crossed (the Potomac) one-half mile west of that point. He has since left the office. My scouts have not yet reported the appearance of the enemy."

So! The enemy was actually north of the Potomac! And Sigel, retreating before him, was hastening to refuge on the heights of Harper's Ferry! Then suddenly the front which I had thought myself too far behind for any disturbance was swinging my way, and demanding my presence.

The map, now a fixture always open on my desk, spoke loudly of the boldness of the enemy. North of the Potomac and moving eastward, what would become of him if Hunter, seized with a spasm of energy, were to break in upon his rear? With Hunter and the Potomac River behind him, what assurance could he have of a successful retreat? Then it came to me that this operation had not been so audaciously undertaken if it were not by an army able to hold its own in rear as well as in front.

The idea of a call for me at the front became more insistent when I reflected that nobody, neither General Kenly, at Cumberland, nor Sigel, nor Weber had ventured a statement of the strength of the advancing enemy with anything like precision. Even Tyler, at Monocacy Junction, whither I had sent him to ascertain all he could of the invading force, could report nothing more definite upon the point than that it would be folly to give figures.

If, as I now thought, the invasion were in force to imperil Washington, was it not my duty to go and in person try to discover the fact that it might be reported in time for action by General Grant at City Point? The duty grew clearer and more imperative as I ran over the consequences of a capture of our capital, while with such mighty notes of proportion and such unprecedented display of men and material we were besieging that of the rebels. Nor did the duty grow less importunate from the fact that the line of march chosen by the enemy ran through my department. I determined to go out to Monocacy Junction and see what I could do to develop the danger.

I sent to Mr. Garrett asking him to have a locomotive ready for me at midnight, and that he would give me right of way as far as the Junction. The departure I wished kept private as possible.

Looking then after the safety of Baltimore and the communication north, to Brigadier-General Morris, at Fort McHenry, I despatched an order to put his command in readiness to act in the works, or to move, as might be necessary,<sup>1</sup> and to General Kenly special directions respecting the ferry across the Susquehanna at Havre de Grace.<sup>2</sup> I also directed Colonel Lawrence to urge the Union League of the city to interest itself actively in organizing citizens into companies for use at home. He was to arm such companies fast as they were organized, and in my absence conduct the office in all respects as if I were present, signing my name as occasion required.

The truth is I did not care to have my absence reported in Washington. That the Junction to which I was going was in my department, and that I was gone

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part i., p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

to the front, might not save me. The departure was without order or permission, and there was no telling in advance how small a thing, under the able management of General Halleck, might be turned to my serious disadvantage. Enough that I knew him to be lying in wait for me. So when, a little after midnight, I climbed into the cab of the locomotive in readiness for me on an outer track of the Camden Street station, there was but one of my officers with me—Lieutenant-Colonel Ross.

LXXI

The departure for Frederick—Available troops—Halleck—Colonel Clendenin—The first gun of Monocacy—Preparations for battle—Deserters from Sigel—Washington menaced.

*March of Events (continued)*

THE run was very rapid, and the night still in hold of the world when at the Junction, with a good-bye to the engineer, we landed from the locomotive. An officer met us, and at my request led the way to the block-house, where we were well received and given bunks, and a soldier's breakfast.

The place was new to me, and at daylight I surveyed it with interest. A few steps westwardly from the block-house, itself a fine example of a kind that might have stood an honorable siege, I stood upon the brow of a bluff bold enough to be impassable to a climber, the river at its foot flowing lazily over a rocky bed. The first object to claim my attention was the iron bridge that had been of such concern to Mr. Garrett. It seemed unusually symmetrical in construction, rising, as I judged, fifty-five or sixty feet above the stream. Down two or three hundred yards below it was another bridge, an old-fashioned, wooden affair, weather-boarded and roofed, and continuing a macadamized pike from bank to bank.

From the iron bridge, converted into a convenient centring point, the landscape radiated, a rarely beautiful view. Not far away on the western side the railway

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

parted; one branch going to Frederick City, the spires of which were in view diagonally off in the northwest scarcely three miles distant; the other branch coursing towards Harper's Ferry, about which a battle might at the moment be going on.

I next saw, filling all the western view, a valley level as a western prairie. Starting from the shore of the river across from the bluff I was on, it spread out to a wall of blue mist ten miles off, which I knew instantly as the Catoctin Mountains. My eyes ranged delightedly over fields actually golden with wheat just ready for the reaper, and interspersed with great, brown-painted barns; the whole so smilingly Arcadian that the thought of war coming to mar it sent a shock through me. I remember the scene yet as one of the most exquisite I had ever seen.

Looking eastwardly next—the direction out of which I had come in the night—I beheld a farm of extensive reach, stretching from the river bluff a succession of meadow-lands and corn-fields, the latter near by, and luxuriantly green with its summer growth. A stately mansion house up in the southeast dominated the farm, belonging, they told me, to a gentleman named Thomas.

Dropping my eyes closer to my stand-point by the block-house, I noticed a little branch in a winding hollow, and a mill which it evidently served; and back of them arose rough, dark-wooded hills completely filling all that part of the east. The railway, by a heavy embankment, defiled into the hills, and after leaving the iron bridge speedily lost itself to sight.

If now the reader wonders at the prolixity of this description, he may possibly be induced to forgive me when I tell him I am trying to help him to an idea of what became the scene of what is known as the battle of Monocacy, then but four days off.

While standing on the bluff making survey of the locality, I was impressed with the north side of the river far as it could be seen as a singularly favorable position for defence. I looked at the bluff with the river at its base too deep for fording, and at the valley beyond it subjecting everything within cannon range to view—cattle, horses, men—and thought how easily a small force there could hold its own against a larger, if only the assailants confined themselves to a front attack—that is, from the west across the fields.

But there was much for me to do besides enjoying the beauty of the landscape.

I sent for General Tyler first thing. He came promptly, and to my inquiry about the news told me his scouts were still out in the direction of Harper's Ferry, and that the story of the enemy having crossed the Potomac at Point of Rocks had sifted down to Mosby's men, less than two hundred in number.

"What of Sigel?" I asked.

"It is hard," he said, "getting at the reliable, the country is so full of rumors; but I have strained them, and helped them out with telegrams, until it may be set down as credible that on the 2d or 3d a cavalry fight took place at Winchester, the enemy, under Ransom, attacking Colonel Mulligan; that Mulligan, overwhelmed, retreated to Martinsburg; that Sigel put his stores in train, and set out for Harper's Ferry, crossing at Williamsport, and marching down the Maryland side. He is now with Weber on Maryland Heights. I ought to tell you," the general added, "that the country for two or three days past has been all stirred up by stragglers in hundreds making for safety they hardly know where."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Three hundred of them had wandered down to Annapolis.



"And the enemy. What is his strength? Who is in command?"

"He is put all the way from five thousand to thirty thousand men, with Early, Gordon, Breckinridge, Ransom, and Bradley Johnson in the lead. One fugitive stopped long enough to tell me that General Lee is commanding in person."

"Where are they now?"

"I don't know—nobody seems to know."

"And that is the best you can give me?"

"The very best."

"Well, we must have something definite, cost what it may."

There was a depot of stores over in Frederick, and an assistant quartermaster or a quartermaster's agent in charge. Calling an officer of the block-house, I told him to go and tell that person I wanted him to come to me immediately.

And when he was come a couple of hours after, I authorized him to employ half a dozen citizens to cross over the Catoctin Mountains west, and learn if there were any Confederate soldiers there, and bring me all the news of them they could get. Those employed were to make pretence of business, and to go by separate roads and singly. I would pay well for the service, particularly if they succeeded. In the afternoon early I had word of citizens out as suggested; and what with them and Tyler's scouts off in the direction of Harper's Ferry, I rested hopefully.

Then an extraordinary circumstance developed. Through the later hours of the night, the sentinels on watch at the wooden bridge brought me in man after man whom I had no difficulty in identifying as citizens under my employment, and they all told me the same story—to the effect that, going by this road or the other

on the mountain they had been halted by horsemen in squads, and turned back.<sup>1</sup>

Straightway I squeezed the circumstance apparently so innocent, and wrung from it a number of inferences.

The squads of armed men on the mountain were cavalry—in likelihood pickets—curtaining an army in motion not far behind them.

The army was coming my way, east.

And when I asked myself what object such a force could have, there was but one I could see to justify the risks—Washington. And admitting myself right in the conjecture, then the pike running from Frederick was of first importance; once in possession of it, the sixty miles to Washington were reducible to two forced marches which, with veterans used to the business, were but trifles.

In the connection I thought of Baltimore; but Washington appeared as defenceless as Baltimore; then when I cast up the consequences of capture, the argument summarily ended.

The circumstance made a deep impression upon me. There was not a moment to be lost. I ordered Colonel Lawrence to forward the troops selected—Alexander's battery, the Eleventh Maryland, the companies from Annapolis, the mounted infantry under Captain Lieb. I debated whether to communicate with General Halleck, and decided not to do so. The situation was as yet too indefinite. Anticipating the need of staff assistance, I called for Colonel Catlin, my inspector, Colonel Bliss, commissary, and Captain Max Woodhull, aide-de-camp, all at Baltimore. I also transferred my quarters from the block-house to a small, one-story frame

<sup>1</sup> When I offered to pay the men they all refused to accept a cent. Some of them regretted they were not in a situation to do more for the cause. I had, of course, to believe what they reported to me.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

building on the railroad not far from the bridge. Then all had been done that could be for the day, and I spent the rest of it seated on a bench near the bluff overlooking the river and the valley off to the distant mountains. Fighting was not yet under consideration.

Next day (the 6th) the citizens in my employment made another attempt to get over the mountain range in the west. In the afternoon one by one they came straggling back all reporting alike—the outposts were on the roads as before, and holding the paths and passes. There was no getting past them. This, of course, but confirmed the opinion that back of the distant, semi-transparent blue wall there was an army. The loveliness of the valley as I viewed it from the bench above the brown flood of the river could not repress the anxiety that possessed me in growing intensity to get something, if only a hint, of that army—if it were coming or going, and in what strength? A squadron of cavalry had been infinitely valuable to me then.

About noon a train arrived with Colonel Landstreet and his regiment, the Eleventh Maryland. I saw them debark from the cars, a good-looking, clean body of city men, but, like their commander, green to a lamentable degree. They were bivouacked for the time in the hollow by the mill where they would be out of sight of the sharp-eyed scouts presumably in the valley.

The same train brought my officers, Colonels Catlin and Bliss, and young Woodhull, the aide, and to them I explained the situation. They accepted my views, particularly of the significance of the look-out on the mountain. It was comfortable to have them with me, and as they were very intelligent, and not without experience, I gave them an invitation to give me their opinions frankly and without reserve.

## LEW WALLACE

About noon the man in charge of the telegraph-office at the bridge brought me a telegram from General Sigel, dated Sandy Hook. I give it almost entire.

“The enemy appears to be moving in strong force towards Frederick; numbers not yet ascertained. Principal force as reported this A.M. moves by Shepherdtown, Sharpsburg, and Hagerstown. . . . From the strength of the enemy in my front, and from all the information, I am almost certain that his forces consist of one corps and three divisions of infantry, and three thousand cavalry. Early, B. T. Johnson, McCauseland, Major-Generals Ransom and Imboden are in command. My advance is skirmishing three miles north of here, and there is also skirmishing between our forces here and at Harper’s Ferry.”

This was confirmatory of the two points of chief importance—the enemy was moving my way, and he was in great force. I lost no time, then, communicating with General Halleck.<sup>1</sup> It came out afterwards that he refused to believe the Sigel despatch I forwarded to him. I lost no time also in picketing and placing strong guards over the bridges, especially the wooden one. Cavalry move rapidly, and are given to surprises.

The next intelligence was more to my liking. A scout of General Tyler’s brought report that a Colonel Clendenin, of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry, was in the vicinity of the mouth of the Monocacy with five squadrons of his regiment looking after Mosby. I determined to send a messenger requesting that he bring his command and come to me, as I had work of the utmost importance for him. He belonged, I knew, to General Auger, but I believed, if his orders did not expressly forbid it, he would come as I asked. That he was a

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part ii., p. 92.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Western man had a great deal to do with my confidence. I despatched the courier, but to make sure I also telegraphed General Halleck:

“If I can have the use of Clendenin’s cavalry, now in this neighborhood, I think I can keep open the communication to Harper’s Ferry. Can you let it report to me a short time?”<sup>1</sup>

Colonel Clendenin did not disappoint me. He came in during the latter part of the night, and waited upon me immediately. He appeared a very earnest man, fine-looking, tall, and quick, and acceded to my suggestions without argument—orders I was not authorized to give him, General Halleck not having replied to my request.

After a full explanation of the situation, as I believed it to be, and of my conjectures based upon it, I told the colonel I wanted him to take his command up and over the mountains, keeping on the go until he either came upon the enemy or assured himself he was not there; that I would give him two guns of Alexander’s battery, which, with Colonel Brown’s One Hundred and Forty-ninth Ohio National Guard, had arrived and gone into bivouac during the night.

Colonel Clendenin might have held back, had he so chosen, various pleas being ready for filing, as the lawyers say; but he accepted the proposal much as if it were an every-day order, asking merely when the guns would report to him. I saw I was dealing with a soldier, and was greatly pleased.<sup>2</sup>

“When can you set out?” I asked him.

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part ii., p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> While *en route* through Frederick, Colonel Clendenin received a telegram directing him to report to me. Up to that time, the more to his credit, he was acting voluntarily.

"Directly the horses are baited. We are not unsaddled."

"Very well; by that time I will have the guns with you. How many men have you?"

"Two hundred and thirty officers and men."

Clendenin needed no "firing up"—that any one can see; nevertheless, I tried to impress him with a right idea of the importance of the work before him.

"You see, colonel," I said, "as yet nobody seems to know how strong the enemy is, or what he has in aim. Suppose it Washington, and it should turn out that he is in force to take it. How can we here in his front hope ever to be excused if he pockets the great prize through our failure to unmask him? We all look to General Grant to save the city. Is it probable he will detach a corps, or even a division, from his work in hand upon nothing better than a rumor or a conjecture?"

I got the section of artillery to the colonel, and it was barely daybreak when he set out. I was with him, and in shaking his hand gave him a last direction—"Send me a messenger every fifteen minutes, if you strike the rebels."

In the afternoon previous I had sent over to Frederick to hire horses for my staff and myself; and now, after a hasty breakfast, I rode to make the acquaintance of the officers of the several commands. Brown and Gilpin won my confidence at sight. From Brown I learned that, though his men were recruited for a hundred days only, the wise governor of his state had selected for the companies all the veteran officers he could secure. He made no doubt of a good report of them should it come to a fight. Upon the strength of his eulogy, and the impression he himself made upon me, I started him immediately for the stone bridge over the Monocacy on the Baltimore pike two miles above

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the Junction, explaining if it were left undefended we should have the enemy upon our backs—provided he appeared. There being one place between the stone bridge and the Junction where the river was fordable, I directed him to drop a company there.

A glance at Colonel Landstreet, of the Eleventh Maryland, satisfied me of his rawness as a soldier. He saluted me, but with a ludicrous defiance of the approved military habit. As a body his men were unexceptional; still I mentally repeated the opinion—"As the officer is, the command will be."

In Captain Alexander, of the battery, I found a gentleman looking like a college professor. He accompanied me while riding through his bivouac. I left him with a feeling that a man of his evident good-breeding could not be ignorant of the service to which he had attached himself or of the fearless kind in battle. If the worst came, the probabilities were I should consider myself fortunate in having him. The battery was of six Parrott rifles, and finely horsed and equipped.

General Tyler introduced me to Colonel Charles Gilpin, of the Third Maryland. I judged him of middle-age; and noticing his quiet manner, veteranish complexion, iron-gray hair, and the evident pride he took in his command, I set him down as one happily described by the French, "Father of the Regiment." And on a little way it will be seen I was not mistaken in judgment.

This visiting was purely social, and in conformity with the principle which I still think should be observed by every commanding officer, knowing as far as possible all with whom he may chance to be associated in duty.

It was ten o'clock when the social function was concluded; and it being about time to hear from Colonel

Clendenin—that is, about the time he should have got into the mountains—I betook myself to the bench by the block-house. If the colonel came upon an enemy, he would doubtless open upon him with his guns, the booming of which I expected to advise me of the fact. I took seat and listened—with what interest may easily be imagined.

The day was delightful. All under the cloudless sky lay in a shimmer of sunshine. The wheat fields, houses, barns, the visible church-spires—everything describable and indescribable entering into the composition of the scene lent it a homelike sweetness peculiarly attractive; and it was having its effect upon me when I heard the report of a distant gun, muffled, to be sure, but from the right direction, and distinctive in that it seemed dropped from the sky, high up, as I fancied it would come if at all.

I started to my feet and listened. There—another gun! An interval—and then the third gun echo-like and fainter, because farther down the mountain-side! There could be no mistake—Clendenin had found the enemy!

The inmates of the block-house rushed out and lined the bluff. There was shouting from the men in bivouac in the low grounds back of the wooden bridge. My officers joined me; and presently we were all silently intent upon the exchange of shots going on in the west. The difference in the sounds became more noticeable, and we knew in a short time that those plainest in the ear were Clendenin's. By-and-by we could tell he was falling back. Now he was on the summit—now he was on the hither side. I took to the bench again. There was nothing to be done but wait.

An hour passed, and then a courier from Frederick galloped thunderously across the wooden bridge, and,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

with a stoppage or two to make inquiry, brought up in front of me. The despatch he delivered was a pocket scratch-book leaf, and in pencil. It has been preserved, and I give it entire.<sup>1</sup>

“CATOCTIN PASS, *July 7, 1864, 10.15 A.M.*

“GENERAL,—I met the enemy in about equal force half-way between here and Middletown, and drove them half a mile, when they rallied and held their position, and finally drove us back to this pass. They received reinforcements, and had an equal number of guns and heavier caliber. Reinforcements still come in from the direction of Boonesborough, and they look like infantry in the distance. I can hold this position against a pretty heavy force if they do not flank me. A detachment of cavalry move over to our left, which I am watching. I will keep you informed of what occurs.

“Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

“D. R. CLENDENIN,

“Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding.”

“I have lost several men wounded, none killed.

“D. R. C.”<sup>2</sup>

Half an hour later another courier brought me a second despatch from Clendenin.

“I have abandoned the pass. Am falling back towards Frederick. A strong skirmish line of two hundred and fifty men advanced on my skirmishers, which I could not spare force to meet and protect my flanks at the same time. A mounted force of at least a squadron moved to the left and an equal force to the right to turn my flanks. I will report anything that may occur. I think a force has gone through on Harper’s Ferry pike. I will be in Frederick in two hours.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. li., part i., p. 1172.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1173.

There was enough now in hand for action on my part, and I lost no time.

Captain Lieb having just come in with his command of mounted infantry, I sent him to report to General Tyler, whom I had already directed to go and take command at the stone bridge on the Baltimore pike.

Availing myself of the opportune arrival of Captain Lieb's train, I directed Tyler to put Gilpin's regiment and Alexander, with three guns of his battery, on the cars and hurry them to Frederick. West of the town Gilpin was to take position to cover it, and be ready to support Clendenin, slowly falling back. The train, returning from Frederick, was to bring away what public stores there might be in depot there, and as many of the sick and convalescent in the hospital as could be safely moved.

These dispositions left with me at the Junction Companies C and K, of the First Maryland; in occupancy of the block-house, two companies of Ohio National Guards under Captain Brown; picketing and guarding the bridges, Landstreet's Eleventh Maryland, and half of Alexander's battery. To strengthen the position, I had a demi-lunette thrown up on the brow of the bluff, and the big brass howitzer brought out and mounted in it. Though hastily erected, the work was substantial, its broad embrasure affording lines of fire commanding every possible approach from the west.

It should be understood now that these steps taken committed me to a stand which had every prospect of ending in a battle. Such a possibility had been in my mind a serious thought since the receipt of General Sigel's timely message announcing a movement of the enemy in the direction of Frederick. *That*, followed by stopping my citizen scouts on the mountain, transformed the merely possible into the very probable.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Now came the corroboration furnished by Clendenin and his reconnoissance, forcing two things upon my perfect comprehension: first, the enemy was coming; second, I was directly in his road, and holding my ground *must* result in collision. That is to say, the very probable had become the inevitable.

It would be disingenuous were I at this point to leave the impression that whether I should hold the ground was not a subject of debate with me. I did debate it, and solemnly; in fact, I can now refer to but few things in my life more solemnly considered. I remember the arguments yet, those for and those against; and, thinking they may be of some interest at this late day, give them briefly.

Twenty-three hundred men was the utmost I could make of my force,<sup>1</sup> and of that number the major part were raw and untried. On the other side, out of the great uncertainty respecting the strength of the enemy, everything known and everything surmisable fixed it that he outnumbered me, and largely.

With a conviction, then, of my comparative weakness, had I a right, morally speaking, to subject those under me to the perils of a battle so doubtful, if not so hopeless?

For the affirmative now.

It was questionable whether the enemy had Washington for his objective, or Baltimore. Enough that I believed it Washington. Then when I ran over all the consequences of the capture of that city, they grouped themselves into a kind of horrible schedule.

<sup>1</sup> Three or four hundred stragglers from General Sigel having come in, General Tyler suggested using them, but I refused, saying that, having deserted Sigel, if anything untoward happened they would desert us. I forbade Colonel Bliss issuing rations to them. They took possession of the wooded hills to the east, and the smoke of their fires was plainly visible through the day.

Thus, at the navy-yard there were ships making and repairing, which, with the yard itself, would be given over to flames.

In the treasury department there were millions of bonds printed, and other millions signed ready for issuance—how many millions I did not know.

There were storehouses in the city filled with property of all kinds, medical, ordnance, commissary, quartermaster, the accumulation of years, without which the war must halt, if not stop for good and all.

Then I thought of the city, the library, the beautiful capital, all under menace—of prestige lost, of the faith that had so sublimely sustained the loyal people through years crowded with sacrifices unexampled in history now struck dead—of Louis Napoleon and Gladstone hastening to recognize the Confederacy as a nation. Certainly these were calamities, every one of them in the category of what would happen if Washington fell; yet, strange to say, not one or all of them projected itself in the swarming of my thoughts with such instantaneous hardening of purpose as an apparition of President Lincoln, cloaked and hooded, stealing like a malefactor from the back door of the White House just as some gray-garbed Confederate brigadier burst in the front door. That I could have such a conception at that time, and under the circumstances, furnishes perhaps the most perfect evidence of the hold that great and good man had taken upon my capacity for loving.

In the determination to stay and fight, I saw three objects to be gained—that must be gained at all hazards:

Making the enemy disclose his strength.

Making him disclose where he was going.

If to Washington, staying him long enough to enable



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

General Grant to forward troops for the defence of the city.

And it did not escape me, moreover, that in the space of two miles there was a convergence of as many roads, one to Washington, the other to Baltimore; a fortunate circumstance, because that one of the two the enemy fought for the most strenuously would indicate his intentions quite as reliably as if he were formally to advise me of them. On the score of duty, then, it only remains to say I had not one lingering qualm.

While standing watching the big gun let down into the little field work, and mounted on the platform of loose boards laid for it behind the embrasure, the operator of the station brought me a telegram.

“CAMDEN STATION, MARYLAND, *July 7, 1864.*

“A large force of veterans arrived by water, and will be sent immediately. Our arrangements are made to forward them with the greatest possible despatch.

“J. W. GARRETT.”

A large force! How many were there? If now they reached me in time! Say not later than to-morrow. I telegraphed Colonel Lawrence:

“Rush the veterans forward.”

He answered:

“... I don't know what you mean by the veterans just arrived.”

Evidently he had not heard of them. I telegraphed back:

“See President Garrett. He will explain. Push now with all your might. The enemy is here.”

## LEW WALLACE

In view of my resolution to keep the Junction with my twenty-three hundred men as best I could, it ought to be easy imagining how welcome this intelligence was. That the help was for me I made no doubt. Much I wondered how many the new-comers were? A division? An army corps? And in thought of the opportuneness of the arrival, I was disposed to be unspeakably grateful. I saw my rôle distinctly—it was to hold the enemy back until the reinforcements reached me, and then do the fighting behind the river where I was, holding the three bridges.

## LXXII

The troops at Frederick—Colonel Clendenin—Colonel Gilpin—The call for reinforcements—The arrival of Colonel Henry and the Tenth Vermont—Alexander's battery—Spectators of the battle—No relief from Halleck—General Tyler.

ABOUT noon a body of horsemen, two hundred and fifty strong, fragments of regiments under Major Wells of the First New York Veteran Cavalry, and an organization calling itself the Independent Loudoun Rangers, reported to me, and were ordered to Colonel Gilpin, who in turn ordered them to Clendenin. Upon the principle that every little helps, they were warmly welcomed.

It was possible that the force I had sent Gilpin to meet might be a mere column of raiders out for plunder. If so, I thought saving Frederick from the squeeze of the marauders enough to justify the interference. My better opinion, however, was that Clendenin was having to do with the advance of General Early's army. If right in this surmise, I fancied that not unlikely I might by an energetic resistance get some data respecting the main body behind the advance, which would be useful in helping me determine upon further action. The orders to Gilpin had been given, it is true, before receipt of notice of the veterans in Baltimore; nevertheless, I allowed them to stand.

Clendenin's retirement had been in the face of a superior force constantly augmenting. It called for coolness and skill on his part, and steadiness on the part of his

men. Often as he halted in a favorable position to resume the fighting, his squadrons dismounted and guns in battery, his opponent also halted, wheeled his guns into battery, dismounted and deployed, and strove to make the most of his advantage in numbers by operating on the flanks. Often, however, as the flankers reached ground in the least dangerous, Clendenin limbered up, remounted, and moved to the rear. In that way hours passed, the enemy making slow progress.

Not later than one o'clock Clendenin reached Frederick. There at the edge of the city west he found Gilpin in line of battle across the Hagerstown road, and Alexander with another of his guns. Resupplying his men with ammunition, by Gilpin's direction he put his command, including Lieb's mounted infantry, Wells's cavalry, and the Loudoun Rangers, in position on the left, everything dismounted. At four o'clock the enemy, his formation completed, opened upon Alexander with three guns, and the cannonading became fast and furious. Then directly Gilpin's whole line was engaged.

I freely admit the great suspense I endured during the four hours and more of this fight. Messages from Colonel Gilpin received in the interim left the issue in great doubt. They went properly to General Tyler, and were forwarded by him.

Thus, at four o'clock:

"The enemy have opened fire and we are replying."<sup>1</sup>

Again, at 5 P.M.:

"The enemy are pressing us, and the Eighth Illinois Cavalry have expended nearly all their ammunition. The

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. li., part i., p. 1171.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

telegraph operator has run away. What shall we do in the emergency?"<sup>1</sup>

And again, at 6.15 P.M.:

"Unless we are reinforced immediately, both in men and ammunition, we will be forced to fall back on Monocacy. We are threatened on our left. The enemy are moving to our left, and trying to get on the National Road.

"P. S.—Send ammunition by all means for infantry, artillery, and Sharp's carbines. Our men fight well."<sup>2</sup>

To despatch reinforcements, as requested, would have been to leave the Junction and the stone bridge, at the moment in the keeping of Colonel Brown, bare of troops, endangering both positions. I sent a verbal message, in substance this:

"I have a telegram announcing veterans from Grant landing at Baltimore, and they will be up some time to-night. Communicate the news to your command. Impress a wagon, and send it to the Frederick station for ammunition, which will be there by the time my courier reaches you. A car is loading now. The fellows fighting you are only dismounted cavalry, and you can whip them. Try a charge on them."

About six o'clock in the evening, the fight having gone raggedly on without volleys, Gilpin seemed to be retiring, and, growing very anxious, I telegraphed Colonel Lawrence:

"I think my troops are retiring from Frederick. If so, they have been directed to fall back upon the Baltimore pike to the crossing of the Monocacy, and to hold the crossing at all hazards."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. li., part i., p. 1171.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. xxxvii., part i., p. 110.

## LEW WALLACE

My purpose was to impress upon him and President Garrett the necessity for hastening the new arrivals to me. Lawrence replied:

"I am pushing the veterans forward with all possible despatch. Also the ammunition. Will send a supply for all arms." <sup>1</sup>

About that time, however, my courier reached Gilpin, and from the bluff on which I sat listening, I noticed a sudden reawakening of the fight, as if a line on one side or the other was stiffening up. Then speedily the artillery and small-arms firing swelled upon the evening air, and became continuous, and I could no longer apportion the sounds between the combatants. A time thus, and the noises, waning to scattering shots, moved from me westwardly. Then, the night beginning to enshadow the valley, a courier from General Tyler came galloping down from the stone bridge. Gilpin had charged the enemy and was driving him back towards the mountain. In great exuberance of spirit I telegraphed General Halleck:

"The enemy attacked a portion of my force in the vicinity of Frederick City this afternoon, with infantry, artillery, and cavalry, and after a severe fight, concluding at dark, they were handsomely repulsed. Will send particulars to-morrow." <sup>2</sup>

To Colonel Lawrence I also telegraphed:

"Think I have had the best little battle of the war. Our men did not retreat, but held their own. The enemy were repulsed three times. The force engaged on our side were the Third Maryland Potomac Home Brigade, two hundred and fifty men; Eighth Illinois Cavalry, Lieutenant-

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part i., p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Colonel Clendenin commanding; three guns. Alexander's battery under his command, and several detachments, including the one hundred days' men, Captain Lieb commanding. The fight began at 4 P.M., and closed at eight o'clock. Colonel Gilpin of the Third Maryland Potomac Home Brigade, in direct command. From best information the rebels were commanded by Bradley Johnson. Losses unknown. This is not official."<sup>1</sup>

Lawrence replied, wanting to know if he should furnish the journals with any portion of the report.

"There are all sorts of rumors," he added, "which will read worse than the truth. Do you communicate direct with General Halleck, or with me to transmit your despatches? I have not sent anything to him yet."<sup>2</sup>

I answered, privately:

"No. Withhold everything except from Mr. Garrett. The fighting has just begun. It will be heavier and more uncertain to-morrow."

To Colonel Gilpin I telegraphed:

"You have behaved nobly. Compliment Lieutenant-Colonel Clendenin and Captain Alexander for me. Endeavor to hold your ground. At 1 P.M. to-night eight thousand veteran troops will be here. Send in the particulars of the fight and list of your casualties. Make no movement to drive the enemy from your front. Let them remain where they are, and I will endeavor to put a force in their rear to-night. Keep me constantly informed."<sup>3</sup>

If the veterans came up, as expected, I thought of running the first troop-train to a point out on the

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part i., p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. li., part i., p. 1172.

## LEW WALLACE

Harper's Ferry branch of the railroad, disembarking the men, and trying by a rapid movement to his rear to intercept Colonel Johnson. Hence the direction to Gilpin to make no attempt to drive the enemy from his front. No troops arrived, however, and the wisdom of the enterprise was not put to test.

Then, in anticipation of what the sun might bring us next day, and counting again upon the promised support from Baltimore, and its appearance some time during the night, I despatched an order to General Tyler:

"You will get the One Hundred and Forty-ninth Ohio National Guard under arms at once, and proceed with them to Frederick City to-night. Assume command there."<sup>1</sup>

Everything then hung dependent upon the veterans. Could I but get a brigade of them up in the night, or even a regiment, it might make me master of the situation. If I could not actually win a victory, by taking the new-comers over to Frederick, I might then be able possibly at least to force a development of what all was behind Colonel Johnson. I communicated my hopes to my staff-officers, and we all became anxious alike.

I had come from Baltimore without any of the appointments of a camp, and the house taken for headquarters was bare as Mother Hubbard's cupboard. There were no chairs or camp-stools, no cots, and but one table. Fortunately the weather was delightful, the sky cloudless, the air soft as spring-time in the Bermudas. We flung ourselves down as the fit seized us, though not to the unbroken sleep of the healthy laborer. The coming of the next train from the east was of too much importance. Time and time again, yielding to the cajolment of our wishes, we arose and listened.

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. li., part i., p. 1171.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I walked several times out to the bluff, but in the moonlit expanse of the valley discovered nothing indicative of war or armies. Neither could I hear anything. That the men who had done the fighting during the day were there somewhere asleep seemed incredible, so deep and universal was the all-pervading hush.

Two of Captain Lieb's mounted men had been left with me as orderlies. One of them, as I lay asleep on a pallet of boards by the door of the house, came and woke me.

"I hear a train in the direction of Baltimore," he said.

I listened. Sure enough—they were coming! Thunder in a drought-stricken land was never more welcome than the increasing roar of the cars. A flock of questions arose. Who were they? Who was in command? Were they for me? Or would they go by? Whoever they were, I knew they must stop, for at the iron bridge there was a strong guard with orders to allow nobody to pass. I sent Colonel Ross to flag the train and bring it to my door, the house standing close by the track.

In a little while the colonel came bringing a stranger. Behind them the locomotive followed slowly, like a huge animal in leash, and back of it the many door-spaces were filled with human heads.

The train stopped.

"This is Colonel Henry, of the Tenth Vermont," Ross said in introduction.

I shook Colonel Henry's hand, telling him I was glad to see him; and Heaven knows how very sincerely I spoke. The colonel's face, however, did not reflect the gladness that must have shown in mine. He was evidently vexed.

"By what authority do you stop me?" he asked.

"You are in my department," I returned; "that

ought to be enough. But have you no orders to stop here?"

"None."

"Where were you going?"

"To Harper's Ferry."

"It is well you stopped, then. I think the part of the railroad between this and the Ferry belongs to General Jubal Early, temporarily at least."

"Jubal Early!" he repeated, in astonishment.

"My people fought his cavalry yesterday from ten o'clock till dark."

"Where?"

"Just beyond Frederick City, three miles from us."

"We left Early, as I thought, somewhere in our front at Petersburg. I wondered why we were ordered to Baltimore. I see now."

I looked Colonel Henry over. He was tall, broad-shouldered, with a campaign complexion. His uniform had seen hard service. I noticed one of his hands minus a finger—probably shot off. His manner, accent, and general appearance were suggestive of Ethan Allen and the Green Mountains. I set him down for a shrewd, brave, conscientious soldier.

"How many of you are there?"

"We are of the First Brigade, Third Division, Sixth Army Corps, and there may be thirty-eight hundred of us in all. Colonel Truex commands the brigade, Brigadier-General James B. Ricketts commands the division. It is my regiment on the train."

"Ricketts?" I said. "An old artillery man, and a good soldier."

"He's all that," returned the colonel.

And seeing his pride in his commander, I added: "Yes, it is such as he that have made your division and

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

corps. We all know of them. I am only sorry there are not five times as many of them with you."

"Why?"

"Because Sigel telegraphed me yesterday that Early has twenty or thirty thousand men."

"And you—what do you say?" asked the colonel.

"I don't know. In fact, I have no opinion. My business is to stay here, where I will be right in the enemy's way, and make him show all that there is of him."

I looked squarely into the colonel's eyes to see how the words would affect him.

"Well," he said, "my orders are to take my regiment to Point of Rocks."

Then he looked me squarely in the eyes, and asked, "What do you think I had better do?"

"When will General Ricketts be up?"

"About one o'clock to-night."

"Very well, colonel, I suggest you let your men get breakfast. Give them an hour for that. Then put them back into the cars, and go with me over to Frederick. Very likely the fighting there will be renewed, and I need you badly. We will be back here by the time Ricketts is due, and you can then take orders from him."

Colonel Henry, it is just to say, did not hesitate an instant.

"We will get breakfast and go with you."

"In an hour?"

"An hour's enough."

A few minutes then and there were a hundred little fires started, each with a black pot in the blaze or hanging from a cross-stick, and each the centre of an expectant group of rugged soldiers, whose handiness with fire, skillet, and coffee-pot bespoke the veteran.

Presently the men were back in the cars. Breakfast was over, and Colonel Henry came to me.

"We are ready," he said.

I stopped to ask how many cartridges he had.

"Pockets and boxes are full—a hundred to the man."

Leaving Colonel Catlin in charge at the Junction, I took seat with Colonel Henry. The train rolled over the bridge, and after a short journey stopped at the station in Frederick, whence the Vermonter, under guidance, disappeared with his regiment to report to General Tyler, leaving me and my officers to wait for our horses, in leading to us by orderlies.

While making the transit, I had told the colonel: "Every movement in and out of Frederick, whether by bodies of men or by individuals, is, in the daytime, under the glasses of the enemy. Of that you may be sure. So it may be well enough for you to try and give as large an impression of your numbers as possible. You know how, of course."

"Yes," he said, "I have practised that before. If the ground is broken, it is easily done."<sup>1</sup>

West of town, almost within the suburbs, I found General Tyler and a line of battle stretched across the Hagerstown road exactly in the position occupied by Colonel Gilpin the day before. The ground struck me as well chosen. From a rise, hardly a hill I saw the enemy off probably a mile and a half, or two miles. He was at a halt, in what strength could not be judged. Raising the glass to the mountain in the farther distance behind him, small clouds of dust were discernible, and as they came descending the heights, they were obviously kicked up by advancing reinforcements, a circumstance in explanation of the inaction in our front.

<sup>1</sup> I was afterwards told that Colonel Henry kept marching and countermarching until his own men were not a little bewildered.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I did not disturb General Tyler in his command, but explained that my object in coming over was to watch the movements of the Confederates, as, if Sigel's reports were reliable, their time of march to Frederick would be due in the afternoon or evening. Together we then rode from flank to flank, and with hearty congratulations I shook hands with Gilpin, Alexander, and Clendenin. While talking with the latter, Colonel Henry came up with his Tenth Vermont, and at my suggestion was posted on the left next the cavalry; this because I suspected the enemy, if sufficiently strengthened, would do his best to turn that flank in order to get between it and the bridges. The Tenth Vermont was not a large accession, yet the regiment and its leader both had my confidence on account of their experience and fighting ability.

Once in awhile a sound of bugles, and a ringing shout, sharp, rattling, came our way from the Confederates.

"The rebel yell," said Tyler.

"They are receiving reinforcements," I suggested, in return. "If so, you may look for them to move shortly."

About ten o'clock a squadron of horsemen left the main body and advanced along the road.

Tyler replied, "They don't know that Alexander has the range of every foot within a mile."

Within five minutes the squadrons rode down into a low place out of sight. When we saw them again they were dismounted, and advancing as skirmishers.

"They are old hands at the business, and don't mean to give Alexander a chance at them," I said, adding, "Look now for a general advance."

And while I was speaking a commotion struck the body halted in the distance, and it moved forward. I saw no colors proper, only guidons, and not many of them.

"Horsemen," I said, "but dismounted. You are to have a repetition of yesterday."

By-and-by our vedettes rode leisurely in. A little later a Confederate gun broke the hush ruling all the field. Scarcely had the sound ruffled past us when Alexander replied. He had the smoke of his opponent to shoot at. At length the skirmishers met, and it was rattle, rattle, and for a wide space the air, low-lying upon the ground, was speckled with whiffs of pale-blue smoke that dissolved before they could rise.

There the fight lagged for a time, an hour or more. Occasionally a man came back limping or helped by a comrade. But for such occurrences one could not have realized that what was going on did not belong to a Fourth-of-July programme.

It broke upon me, at length, that the enemy did not design attacking in earnest, he was merely amusing us. I so expressed myself to General Tyler; after which, it being about noon, I kept my glasses fixed upon the mountains, and pretty soon fancied a thickening of dust up towards the summit not unlike a slowly increasing cumulus cloud.

About that time a messenger brought me a telegram from Harper's Ferry, signed, "Howe, commanding," and suggesting that I march thither and join forces with him. Who was Howe? My last despatch from that quarter had been from Sigel, giving me to understand that the enemy had left him and was marching upon Frederick City. If so, Harper's Ferry was, in military parlance, *turned*, leaving the army upon its heights of no more importance in the operations pending than so many stones or palisade stakes. Instead of my joining Howe, whoever he might be, why did he not come to me? Early was here, not there, and here was fighting. Here, as the situation appeared to me,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the fate of Washington was to be determined. I suspected at once that Sigel had been removed; nevertheless, I answered the communication promptly.

“HEADQUARTERS, FREDERICK CITY, July 8, 1864.

“*Major-General Sigel or Brigadier-General Howe:*

“The tenor of the information received from Major-General Sigel, per telegram of this date, makes me think it injudicious to advance from Frederick until I receive further intelligence of the movements of the main body of the enemy, said to be retiring towards Boonesborough, and until concentrated action can be had between my force and that at Harper’s Ferry. You will oblige me, therefore, by telegraphing me the latest intelligence concerning the movements of the enemy. As soon as a line of action is adopted at Harper’s Ferry you will further oblige me by sending a statement of it by a confidential and reliable officer. I find it impossible to move immediately owing to the insufficiency of supplies. The latter objection will be abated to-morrow.

“LEW WALLACE,

“Major-General Commanding.”<sup>1</sup>

Before leaving the Junction I had been notified by General Tyler that the enemy, reinforced, was attacking his advance;<sup>2</sup> upon the strength of that notice, together with what I myself observed after reaching Frederick, I ordered Catlin to send me Landstreet’s Eleventh Maryland, and all other troops as fast as they arrived.<sup>3</sup> This would have stripped the Junction bare, except of the two companies in the block-house, and might have been a serious mistake; my idea being to dispose of the force in front of Frederick by an energetic push before the main column came down the mountain. Clendenin, however, operating with his troopers over on the left,

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part ii., p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. li., part i., p. 1174.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

sent a messenger to tell me the enemy was manœuvring in a manner to threaten the bridges. I despatched Catlin a countermanding order,<sup>1</sup> and fortunately it was in time.

The contention between the skirmishers went languidly on. Occasionally the artillery joined in and broke the monotony, the swish of the shells in flight giving the men lying upon the ground in lines occupation, if not amusement.

Meantime I kept my glass busy searching the purpling face of the mountain, and about four o'clock was rewarded by catching sight of three long, continuous yellow cloud-lines, apparently on as many roads, crawling serpent-like slowly down towards the valley. Watching first one and then the other, I fancied I could now and then see flags gleaming faintly through the dust. There was no longer room for a doubt; what I saw were columns of infantry, with trains of artillery—good strong columns they were, too, of thousands and thousands. I called to Tyler: "Look yonder! That is what the fellows in our front here have been waiting for. They think we will stay to be taken in. We will disappoint them. To-night we will get back to the Junction. Only keep your own counsel. I will give you the word."

After studying the yellow streaks on the mountain, he said: "Yes, they are coming. We have been fighting an advance-guard."

Once the body directly before us started forward as if to charge. When it had come in range, our line arose to receive it. The artillery also engaged. The fight, becoming lively, involved everything from flank to flank. I took post behind Colonel Brown's hundred-

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. li., part i., p. 1174.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

day men, and was delighted to see them face the music like veterans. They cheered heartily when, five or ten minutes having passed, their opponents gave way. The retreat, which I watched carefully, amused me. The horses reached, there was mounting in hot haste, and a ride disorderly. We did not pursue Colonel Johnson.

In the midst of this flurry, some one called my attention to people perched on a fence back of the line towards the town. There were women and children in the crowd.

"Good Heavens!" I cried out. "Those people are in range of the bullets. Ride, some of you, and order them away."

Somebody spoke up: "It is useless. They were there all day yesterday. We tried driving them off, but they wouldn't go."

"They must go. Some of them will be hit."

Several officers, thus urged, hurried off, and riding up and down exerted themselves to disperse the assemblage. But persuasion and threats were in vain.

I could think of but one explanation of the very remarkable indifference to danger thus displayed. Frederick City and the region around it had been a playground for the game of war from its first year, and the people had grown so used to it in all its forms that even battle had ceased to have terrors for them.

The sun went down at last, and a quiet, the more noticeable because of the distracting noises that had rent the afternoon, settled over the town and valley. Near that hour a note from Clendenin was put in my hand:

"GENERAL,—The enemy is moving a battery and reinforcements to his right against our left. He has not crossed the river, but it can be crossed. I have sent a force to Urbana to watch the approach from Buckeys-

## LEW WALLACE

town. Urbana is three miles from us, and I learn Buckeystown is the same distance from Urbana.”<sup>1</sup>

This was corroborated a few minutes later by a telegram from Catlin, at the Junction:

“Three deserters from the rebels have arrived, who report that Breckinridge has some twelve thousand men marching in the direction of Harper’s Ferry. I am also informed that a rebel advance is on the Buckeystown road. If I had one or two cavalymen I could use them. The enemy is on the road between Point of Rocks and Berlin in strong force. They seem to be moving this way.”<sup>2</sup>

Using the courier from Clendenin, I sent him an order:

“Take your own command, and cross the river at the first ford below the wooden bridge on the Washington pike, and hold it against the enemy to-night and to-morrow. I will return everything here to the east bank at the Junction to-night, setting out immediately. Strong columns are moving down the mountains. They will attack us in force in the morning. Take care of my left as best you can.”

Then I sent for General Tyler, and we talked the situation over. In course of the conversation, I told him, substantially: “The enemy is moving on our left. So say both Catlin and Clendenin. It is evident to me that he wants the pike from Frederick to Washington, which means Washington; and he will get it unless we can hold him back long enough for General Grant to send a corps or two from City Point. The enemy outnumbered us, that is plain, but because we don’t know

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. li., part i., p. 1175.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1174.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

how much, we must fight. At all hazards we must fight. When Ricketts' men are all up, there being three brigades, I think we can at least count upon three thousand of them, perhaps more. Our strength will then be in round numbers fifty-five hundred."

"Only fifty-five hundred!" said Tyler. "But Sigel's stragglers—you don't include them?"

"No. They say a tailor is the ninth part of a man. I don't know about that; but this I do know, a straggler is not the ninth part of a soldier."

I went on.

"Say we have five thousand present to-morrow morning. Of them I will give you all we brought up from Baltimore—twenty-five hundred—leaving to Ricketts his entire division. Him I will post south of the railroads to fight for the Washington pike, and he will compose our left. To you I will intrust the right, extending from the railroad bridge of the Junction to the stone bridge on the Baltimore pike; the main body at the stone bridge, for if we have a hope left us of getting away at all, it must be by using the Baltimore pike. What do you say?"

"I have a hope that Ricketts may be stronger than you think him; also that we have exaggerated Early's force. However that may be, I think of no better disposition of what we have, and I will do my best. It looks desperate; still I agree that we ought to fight."

"Very well. I am glad we are in accord. And now it is time to be off. Face the line just as it is by the right flank—just as it is, only bringing Alexander and his guns in front of Colonel Henry and the Vermonters. Pass through the town saying nothing. It looks like deserting a lot of generous, loyal people, but we can't help it. So the least said the better. Clendenin I have ordered elsewhere. Use Lieb for rear-guard. March

slowly so as to prevent straggling. When you reach the bridge, drop Colonel Brown there, with Lieb and his men. And remember that under no circumstances must the bridge be given up. Landstreet had better be left in reserve on the height by the block-house. The three guns you may keep, using them at discretion. So, too, I leave the distribution of the men of your command at your discretion. Remembering all the time that if the stone bridge is lost we are all lost."

General Tyler and I shook hands and separated; he to set his command in motion. With my officers, and the two orderlies, I took my way in advance through the town, it being of the utmost importance that I should make the Junction as soon as possible. It was the twilight hour, not yet dusk. I could not avoid recognition entirely. Several citizens put themselves in my way to ask the news and where I was going. I could but observe their anxiety; their voices conveyed it. At every corner along the main streets I remember noticing barrels standing full of water for passing soldiers, each barrel with its complement of bright tin cups. The town undoubtedly had its disloyal faction bitter to vituperation; in counterbalance, however, it had its legion devoted soul and purse to the Union. And it was hard abandoning them. In fact, I remember few circumstances in my life more trying.

Our way was along the Baltimore turnpike. Crossing the river by the stone bridge, we turned to the right, and with some stumbling through the dark, deepened by trees overhanging the country road, at last regained headquarters at the Junction.

Having resolved upon the withdrawal from Frederick, my last act there was to apprise General Halleck of the intention. I accordingly sent him the following telegram:



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“HEADQUARTERS, FREDERICK CITY, MARYLAND,

“*July* 8, 1864.

“Breckinridge, with a strong column, moving down the Washington pike towards Urbana, is within six miles of that place. I shall withdraw immediately from Frederick City, and put myself in position on the road to cover Washington, if necessary.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part ii., p. 127.

## LXXIII

The doctor's horse—Available troops—Their disposition—The two bridges—General Ricketts—The twenty-four-pounder howitzer—The fight in the cornfield—Colonel Clendenin.

THE horse that had fallen to me had been, as I afterwards learned, the favorite servant of a physician in Frederick City; and now, besides age and a constitutional tendency to slowness, a lost shoe furnished him an excuse for a half-limp. So it was a trifle before midnight when we dismounted in front of headquarters at the Junction.

Colonel Catlin was very glad to see us, having been uneasy lest I should be detained too long in Frederick. By his scouts he had been kept well informed of the movements of the enemy. He took me into the meagrely furnished room, lighted by a single candle, and in reply to a question gave me a list of troops then at the Junction, the arrivals from Baltimore during the day. I am able to restore the list by aid of official reports, and I give it with a sense of gratitude, and a keen desire to perpetuate far as in me lies the memory of organizations that offered themselves, without a murmur, to the extreme sacrifices demanded of them next day.

The One Hundred and Sixth New York, Captain Edward Paine commanding; the One Hundred and Fifty-first New York, Colonel William Emerson commanding; the Fourteenth New Jersey, Lieutenant-Colonel C. K. Hall commanding; the Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania, Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Stahel commanding.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

These composed the First Brigade of the Third Division of the Sixth Army Corps, under Colonel William S. Truex. And when the Tenth Vermont, Colonel Henry, then marching from Frederick, arrived, the First Brigade would be present in its entirety.

I asked Colonel Catlin about the strength of the regiments, and remember his answer.

"Speaking without returns," he said, "I saw them get off the cars and move to bivouac down by the creek, and judge them to average five hundred men each, some more, some less."

"Two thousand! That is good. How about General Ricketts."

"Colonel Truex told me the general would be up on the first troop-train. He looks for it about one o'clock to-night."

I ordered Colonel Ross to be on hand at the coming of the train, and called for pen and ink. Every one offered me a pencil. I had to send to the block-house for the other articles, including the loan of a couple of candles. Finally I took seat at the table, and dictated the following order:

"HEADQUARTERS, MONOCACY JUNCTION,

"July 8, 1864.

*"General Ricketts:*

"GENERAL,—I am instructed by the general commanding to direct you to move your whole command to the left of the railroad, with your front to the Monocacy, with a view of guarding the approaches on the Washington road.

"You will establish your picket-line as you may deem best suited to attain this object, connecting on your right with the line of Brigadier-General E. B. Tyler. The men will move to the position indicated at once; your pickets will then be established. You will provide your command with three days' rations.

## LEW WALLACE

"No citizen within your lines will be permitted to leave them without a written pass from your headquarters. Citizens will only be admitted to give information touching the movements of the enemy.

"You will make to these headquarters a morning field-return of your command. You will also report by regiments the number of rounds of ammunition per man in your division. You will report the means of transportation in your command.

"MAX. WOODHULL, Aide-de-Camp."<sup>1</sup>

To General Tyler I sent an order similar in effect, only he was directed to encamp his men on the right of the railroad, and establish his pickets connecting with those of General Ricketts on his left.

In these two orders the reader must see my dispositions for the battle which it was not to be doubted would be of early occurrence in the morning. Taken in connection with the conversation with General Tyler while we were making ready to vacate Frederick, it ought not to be difficult to comprehend them.

That is to say, all north of the railroad belonged to General Tyler; it being his to hold the stone bridge and the Baltimore turnpike, by which such of us as came out alive might retreat; while south of the railroad was to be assigned to General Ricketts, upon whom I thought the stress of the fighting would fall. The raw men to Tyler; the veterans to Ricketts.

It is to be added now, that before news of the arrival of General Ricketts reached me, I had resolved to take position at Monocacy Junction, and stay there with the twenty-five hundred men drawn from my own department. The resolution is to be seen in my promises

<sup>1</sup> *War Records*, series 1, vol. li., part i., p. 1175.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

to President Garrett; and the danger to Washington, when confirmed, but hardened the determination. To stay without reference to the odds against me, and do all possible to hamper and hinder the march of the Confederates, and force a showing of their purpose and strength—such was my resolution.

These preparations off my hands, I made a pillow of my folded coat, stretched myself upon the floor, and tried to sleep, but could not. The length of the line to be defended—fully three miles if the sinuosities of the river were followed—and the meagreness of the defenders, would not out of mind. Nor could I cover up the desperation of the work—how hopeless it was of victory. The sputtering candles upon the tables were not plainer to me, when I looked at them, than that the venture upon which I was launched could have but one result, if what was reported of Early's army were but half true.

There are two other points to plague me. The first will not be new to officers who, under trying circumstances, have felt their spirits flinch under the goad of responsibility. To what extent did my right as commander go in the exposure of the men under me? Was there not a limit to my authority? And what weight was I morally bound to give the admitted fact, that the venture proposed was desperate as respects both life and victory? Suffice it that I settled the point in a manner to my own satisfaction, at least, by the old argument that the obligations of duty were not apportionable; or if so, they were heavier upon the officer than his men.

The next point lingered longest with me, and, I am bound to confess, had a sharper sting than the other. The risk of battle taken, if I lost, as seemed inevitable, the chief of staff in Washington, having at last the ex-

cuse for which he had been so long lying in wait, would not spare me. No, not though his safety was within the scope of my effort, as well as that of the city in which he was housed.

I tried in thought of the matter to be philosophical; but it ought not to be strange to anybody if I could not sleep; nay, if, knowing myself so at his mercy, I gnashed my teeth.

In the midst of these unpleasantnesses, Colonel Ross, answering the challenge of the orderly, appeared in the door, and behind him a stranger. I arose, and was introduced to Brigadier-General James Ricketts, chief of the Third Division of the old justly famous Sixth Army Corps.

He was slightly above the average height of men, a little inclined to corpulency, quick and bluff in manner and speech, Celtic in feature and complexion, and at the moment serious. Beyond the usual hand-shake, there was no ceremony between us, no asking after health or news, no gossip, no apologies.

"It is true, then, that Jubal Early is here?" he asked.

"Yes, at Frederick City. His camp-fires are in sight."

"How many men has he?"

"That is variously reported. Sigel put it at twenty to thirty thousand. I know nothing personally beyond the fact that yesterday, just west of the town, my people whipped his advance-guard under Bradley Johnson."

"Hum!" said Ricketts, taking a moment to digest the answer. Then abruptly, "What are you going to do?"

"I came here to fight."

"How many men have you?"

"Twenty-five hundred of my own department. There

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

are said to be five or six hundred stragglers from General Sigel, but I have refused to recognize or ration them."

Ricketts studied me a moment, then burst out, "Twenty-five hundred against thirty thousand!"

"How many have you?" I asked.

"About five thousand."

"Seven thousand five hundred," I said. "That's first rate."

"It is fight, you say. Well"—the old soldier was thinking fast—"what for?"

"Objects?"

"Yes."

"I have three objects. I want first to make him tell us where he is going, whether to Baltimore or Washington."

"That's good. But how?"

"There are two turnpikes here within two miles of each other, one to Baltimore, the other to Washington. The one he makes his main fight for will, I take it, expose his object. I am already convinced he means Washington."

"Think so? How far is it from here to Washington?"

"About sixty miles."

"Two marches," said Ricketts, reflectively.

"Yes—forced marches. Leaving Frederick in the morning, he could, there being no interruption, reach the city by day after to-morrow in the evening."

"He has the reputation of being a good soldier." Ricketts observed.

"That he will now lose."

"How so?"

"He should be in Washington now."

"Impossible!"

"Not at all," I replied. "He had only to cross the

Potomac at Edwards Ferry below Harper's Ferry. No power on earth could then have saved the city from him. As it is, he has fooled away his time and chances, and an opportunity which, if now lost by him, the Confederacy can never hope for again."

Ricketts laughed, but composing himself, resumed, "You had three objects, I believe you said."

"Yes, you have the first one. As to the second—it is strange, and argues ability, that Early should have been able to march an army from the vicinity of Richmond, drive Hunter out of his road, put Sigel to sleep on Maryland Heights, and turn up here, only two marches from Washington, with none of our people—no, not one—to tell within ten thousand what his strength is, so effectively has he curtained his columns behind his cavalry. And now there is nobody between Early and Washington but us. Our duty is plain. It is to push the curtain aside, and make him show us what all he has."

Ricketts brought his hand down upon the table, and swore a round soldier's oath in emphasis of his, "That's so—that's so!"

And I went on. "You have my second object, and I will pass to the third, which I think the most important of the three. If we can maintain ourselves here, and by hook or crook get thirty-six or forty hours on Early, that, added to the two days of forced marching required of him, will give General Grant ample time to get a corps or two into Washington and make it safe. General Grant is the only hope, and he must have notice and time."

"But Halleck, what is he doing?"

"Defending Harper's Ferry."

Ricketts looked at me curiously, and said, "I don't understand you."



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Instead of strengthening me here, he has sent batteries and thousands of men to the old Ferry, and they are on Maryland Heights now, of no more account in the defence of Washington than so many stones. I have been here three days, and he has not so much as wired me a word of intelligence respecting the enemy, or in the way of encouragement."

Then I told Ricketts of the invitation I had received to go to Harper's Ferry and join the useless army on Maryland Heights.

"What! And give Early a clear road to Washington! Never—never! We'll stay here. Give me your orders."

I saw then he was aroused, and thoroughly in sympathy with me, and said, with a feeling I could not have hidden had I wanted to: "General Ricketts, I knew you would stay with me, and, in proof of it, here is an order drawn in advance of your arrival. Read it, and you will see my opinion of you."

Taking the order from the table, I delivered it to him; and when he had finished the reading, he put it in a pocket, and, giving me his hand, said, "You expect the fight in the morning?"

"Yes, in the morning."

"Very well. I should be in my position before day-break. Let one of your officers come and show it to me."

"Colonel Ross will go with you," I answered. "He knows the ground." And to Ross I said: "The position is across the pike behind the wooden bridge." Turning again to Ricketts, I added: "I put you across the Washington pike because it is the post of honor. There the enemy will do his best fighting."

Again we shook hands and separated; and when Ricketts was gone, I lay down and slept never more soundly.

While our slender breakfast was getting ready in the morning, I walked out to the bluff by the railroad bridge. Everywhere I read the promise of a beautiful summer day. There was not a speck in the sky, and the departing night had left a coolness in the air delicious and most refreshing. Behind me little columns of smoke were slowly rising; the same indications across the river told where our pickets were in post and wide awake; beyond them, in the direction of Frederick, a denser smoke lay along the earth in the form of a pallid cloud hanging not higher than a tree-top, and it spoke of the enemy; and everywhere friends and foes alike were at coffee or making it. The smell of new mown hay from the yellowing stubble-fields was lost in the sooty perfume of the many fires.

Breakfast over, with my staff I rode to General Ricketts, and found him down in the low land of the little creek not far from the mill, and together we went to get a look at his men in position. In the posting, Colonel Ross had shown excellent judgment. It was, in fact, so satisfactory to General Ricketts, when viewed at daylight, that he left it unchanged—a circumstance which did not surprise me, to whom the colonel had given too many proofs of his soldierly qualities for surprise.

In the *negligée* of general rest, the regiments were in two lines extending north and south, with an interval of seventy or eighty yards between them, the railroad in the centre, their left in deployment over a hill, their right in a depression. Below, and not far away, the gray-stained, roofed, wooden bridge spanned the river. As we passed along, Ricketts would say, "There is such a regiment; and this such another"; now it was a New Jersey, now a New York, now a Vermont. At the conclusion of the informal inspection, we continued

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

our ride to a point well forward of the first line on the summit of the hill from which the valley spread in smiling landscape clear to the mountains in the west.

With my glass I swept the country in the direction of the city, searching for signs of the enemy. Directly I caught sight of a dark line beginning to stretch itself out on the Buckeystown road.

"They are moving," I said to Ricketts.

"Which way?"

"This way," I answered, and passed the glass to him. In a few seconds he gave me the glass back, saying:

"Two miles and more. We can reach them easily."

Turning to one of his officers. "Ride," he said, "and tell Captain— What is his name?"

"Alexander," I returned.

"Tell Captain Alexander to open fire." Then to me, "There's something in having the first shot."

"Those we see are cavalry," I said.

Presently another column appeared on the Washington pike leading directly to the wooden bridge.

"A regiment on the pike," I said.

Ricketts took a deliberate look at the second apparition, and then remarked: "Yes, two regiments, as regiments on both sides now go. They are too few to mean a serious, straight attack. The other column is sheering round to our left. Is there a ford in that direction?"

"There is one about a mile below the bridge here. But it is held by six squadrons of Illinois cavalry."

After watching the developments for a time, I broke off: "We must get a welcome ready for the fellows coming at us. Look beyond the bridge a little to the left, and you will see two companies of Ohio men deploying as skirmishers. There is not enough of them. Please reinforce them with a company. And send another company to the bridge—and have the officer in

charge get kindling ready to touch off in an instant. It may be necessary to burn the bridge. He will hold it till I send him word."

An orderly galloped down the hill with Ricketts' directions. About that time the report of a gun broke the impending silence, the first of the battle, one of Alexander's.

Now Ricketts was an old artilleryist.

"A Parrott!" he exclaimed. "Have you nothing better?"

"Yes, a twenty-four-pounder howitzer."

"That will do. Let them have it!"

Evidently my prejudice against the three-inch rifled gun was well seconded.

Soon an officer came up the hill at a furious pace. Pulling rein in front of me, and saluting, he said: "I am Captain Wiegel, General Tyler's assistant adjutant-general. He sends me to report to you, and say that, with your permission, I will take charge of the howitzer in the work by the block-house."

"Do you know how to serve it?"

"Perfectly."

"You are the man I want. Go and get to work."

The captain departed as he came. Soon afterwards two companies broke from Ricketts' forward line, and went to the front on the double-quick. Who they were I did not know, but I watched them. One halted at the mouth of the bridge; the other continued on, never stopping until merged in the array of skirmishers across the pike. Simultaneously the vedettes rode in, followed by the pickets. They were the last troops to avail themselves of the bridge, the last that ever crossed it.

Meantime the regiments moving against us, though under Alexander's fire, at a certain distance halted and deployed, executing the fanlike movement with a



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

rapidity and regularity simply beautiful. While deploying, they advanced to the attack yelping after their style.

"Old soldiers!" said Ricketts.

"Yes," I said. "But see what comes now!"

As I spoke, up the pike there tore forward through clouds of dust groups of laboring horses dragging bright brass guns and clumsy caissons. The riders plied their whips viciously.

"How many guns?" asked Ricketts.

"Sixteen."

"But you must be counting caissons as well."

"No, guns; all brass pieces."

He whistled low, and said, much like a father sending his love and regrets after a lost son, "If I had my old battery here!"

Here the howitzer, opening upon the racers, took up its cry; a very loud note it was, an immense pounding sound singularly laden with encouragement to us. Alexander, with his three guns—the other three were with Tyler—and Wiegel, by the block-house, lost not a minute, so fair was the target. Then shortly the skirmishers joined in with their practice, ours firing from cover, and sending their *vis-à-vis* to the ground crawling forward like snakes.

I saw Wiegel's first shell burst above the gunners on the pike. Before the little bunched-up white cloud left by the missile had disappeared, before the howitzer could be reloaded, the pike was cleared. And such a skurrying! The groups divided, some going to the right of the road, some to the left. I could see the drivers using their whips mercilessly, the horses plunging, the riders tossing in their seats like rag puppets. Under other circumstances the sight had been amusing; but I knew better than to laugh. It was experience, not

fear or panic, governing the gunners. The survivors of unnumbered fights, they were seeking the best positions from which to deal us their thunder. In a space incredibly brief they were all out of view, and widely apart behind barns and out-houses, under shelter of hay-stacks or hidden in clumps of bushes. I could see none of them, search as I might.

"There!" said Ricketts. "Did you hear that?"

"What?"

"Some sharp-shooter is after us. He is getting the range."

"Where is he?"

"Over there by the red barn."

I turned my glass in that direction without success. While looking for the fellow—why I do not know—a ball zipped by between us.

Doubtless we both had the same idea at the same instant. If we stayed there, invisible riflemen would get one of us. We wheeled, and rode farther up the hill. And while in the act, over our heads, making light of the air through which it sped, there went a shell in flight towards the mansion-house in the perspective across meadows in the southeast.

"Whose house is that?" asked Ricketts, drawing rein.

"A Mr. Thomas's."

"Well, were I near him I should advise him to take to the woods. It will be an uncomfortable habitation before the day is done."

As we were going over the crest of the hill, I stopped and looked back, attracted by a sudden increase of viciousness in the exchange between the skirmishers.

"Look at that," I said.

"What is it?" Ricketts asked, drawing rein.

"That clump of half-grown trees towards the river. You see it?"

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Yes."

"It is directly in front of the right of our skirmishers, and the enemy is filling it with men. If they turn our flank, I shall have to burn the bridge."

Ricketts observed intently, but presently exclaimed: "It's all right! Our fellows see the game. The weeds hide a lot of them crawling to the right, and they will get there in time."

Thereupon we sat silent. Out of the little grove a score or more men in gray broke yelping; but "ours," meeting them with a sharp, spattering fire, sent them to cover, where, if they had been killed, they could not have crouched closer.

"Good!" I said. "The old bridge has another chance for life."

While I spoke, two, three, five guns from as many different positions across the river opened fire. A minute, and still others joined in. By the white smoke clouds we could count them—eighteen in all.

"There—listen—from up the river," I said.

Under the near-by cannonading, in the intervals between guns and exploding shells, we caught detonations lower in tone but not so frequent.

"What does that mean?" Ricketts asked.

"It means the enemy is trying to get the stone bridge on the Baltimore pike some two miles above this. He is engaging Tyler."

"What of that bridge?"

"If Tyler loses it," I replied, "we are cut off."

Ricketts became thoughtful.

"Is there no other way of getting us out?"

"None, except we take to the Washington pike."

"Who is Tyler?"

"A man of intelligence, and brave. He has been in the war from the beginning, and understands the need

## LEW WALLACE

of the bridge to us clearly as we do. I rely upon him."

We continued on over the hill.

### *Ten o'Clock*

Behind the summit, well down the north face, we came upon the two brigades of Ricketts' division fronted westwardly, and lying down. Parts of the lines were without cover. With a splendid contempt for the shells streaming above them, and the sharp explosions so nerve-racking to young soldiers, the whole command seemed in mid-enjoyment of a morning nap. There I separated from Ricketts.

"If at any time you wish to communicate with me," I told him, "a messenger will find me on the height yonder, just beyond the block-house. From that point I can overlook your whole field; and, besides, Tyler's left joins you there."

After that I rode first to the mill, near which the surgeons of the division had established a field-hospital, intending, as I was told, to use the building for shelter of the wounded. The place appeared well selected for the purpose, its one inconvenience being that it was under fire.

Some doors had been unhinged and laid lengthwise on trestles, forming a table about which the operators stood in a little group. Most of them were in their shirt-sleeves, and they were all perfectly composed. A few were smoking. While I sat surveying the scene, a man was brought in bloody and screaming. In a moment he lay stripped. A jagged fragment of a shell had torn a furrow across his breast. I could see his lungs clipped and exposed. No need of probing. The chief gave the wound one look, and followed it with a silent



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

wave of the hand; whereupon the under-assistants lifted the doomed subject and bore him away to die slowly and in agony. As I turned to escape the spectacle—from the piercing cries there was no escape—it came to me what some may think a horrible thought: why should not a surgeon, seeing death inevitable, be required to speed the end?

Seeing others wounded coming in, I called my officers, and rode away, and as we started a cannonading broke out in the south. The halt was instantaneous.

“What is that?” asked Ross.

“The enemy has reached one of the fords below the wooden bridge,” I answered.

“What can Clendenin do against artillery?” young Woodhull inquired.

“Nothing but get out of the way. In other words, the enemy will get his feet wet crossing the river; all the same, he is now making to our side of it, bringing Ricketts the real tug of the day. Let us ride now, and find a position from which we can watch him.”

The road we took from the mill to gain the height above the block-house led across a stretch in plain view of the able gunners giving us such worry from the other side of the river. Hardly had we begun the sloping rise when they saw the party and turned all their guns upon it—how many we had not time to count. The noise overhead became deafening, and the whiz of flying iron incessant. Up all around us sprang little gushes of gravel and yellow dust. There was not an instant I did not look to see a horse, possibly a horse and rider, go down. I thought to make haste, and plied spurs to quicken my steed. I beat him with the flat of my sabre in vain. He could not be brought to discern his danger or ours. Walk he would. Finally I called to my men: “Go ahead! As you love your lives, gallop on!”

They looked everywhere but at me.

"Do you hear? Go ahead!" I again yelled to them. "Don't you see they are making a target of the crowd?"

Not a man showed a sign of hurry. They would have died first. So at a slow walk, as horses move, we rode through the most searching artillery-fire I ever encountered—a confusing fire—and that no one of the party was hit appears to me even at this long, belated hour miraculous.

*Ten-thirty o'Clock*

The height which I had chosen for a stand-point, at last safely gained, was under fire like all the rest of the field. Below us, on the brink of the river-bluff, Captain Wiegel and his squad of gunners stood by the twenty-four-pounder, and he was not wasting his ammunition. The piece, and the half-finished work encircling it, were a centre of attention with the eager enemy. Lines of fire from a dozen or more points terminated there. Following the flight of a shell, I observed a regiment lying down directly behind Wiegel's position. Every missile that passed him overshot reached the regiment. I sent to inquire whose command it was and what it was doing there.

"Colonel Landstreet's Baltimore regiment, in reserve by order of General Tyler, and supporting Captain Wiegel," was the answer.

The colonel's idea of "supporting a battery" was to locate himself directly in its rear. He was, of course, shifted to one side, but not until he had lost some of his men.

Not to offer too much of an attraction to the enemy, I had our horses led out of his sight, after which there was leisure to think of the situation. The valley west of the Monocacy and the low grounds on our side of the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

river, up far as the Thomas mansion, were in plain view, except as it was obstructed by the swiftly vanishing clouds incessantly flecking the air. Up at the stone bridge in the north the guns were still at work, a notice after their kind that Tyler, Gilpin, and Low were holding their own, and their hundred-day men rapidly veteranizing. Giving attention then southward beyond Ricketts, I was struck by a portentous silence there, a silence heavy with meaning; insomuch that a messenger was not required to come and tell me of the fords lost to us and of Confederates across and forming for attack.

And Clendenin—where was he? A common soldier with a putty heart could find in the conditions of the field plenty of excuses for taking to the Washington pike and abandoning me. Was he of that kind? I sent a man serving as orderly with a hastily dictated note requesting the colonel, if he had not already done so, to fall back through Urbana in the direction of New Market on the railroad, and do his utmost to keep the enemy from getting in my rear.<sup>1</sup>

It may be well believed that at this period of the affair I kept an eye closely on my watch. Was I not fighting for time?

When the slow-going minute-hand reached

### *Eleven o'Clock*

I felt a thrill of gratification. Four hours gained! Four hours, and Early still in Frederick, not one step nearer his great prize than when the dawn delivered the steeples of the town from the envelope of night! Should I give notice to the authorities in Washington,

<sup>1</sup> In good time the courier returned to tell me Clendenin was then in Urbana covering the road to New Market. He had anticipated my suggestion.

and to General Grant at City Point, of what was going on? Not yet, I said to myself—not yet. For if asked, I could not have told to which city my antagonist was going, or how many men he had. Looking towards Frederick, I could see the smoke of camp-fires and wagons in park, and artillery, and a cloud of soldiers ominously suggestive of yet another army corps. Nevertheless, the revelations were as yet too indefinite for committal to the wires; besides which it remained to see what Ricketts and his sturdy regiments could do. I had come to have an immense confidence in him and them. How many hours additional might they not win for the Cause? Away down in my heart I was conscious of the fluttering of a hope which I was not sanguine enough to put into words.

What with anxiety and excitement my tongue had become very dry; but having put a lemon in my pocket in the morning, I was finding relief sucking it, when Colonel Catlin, near by, asked, "Are not those skirmishers I see yonder?"

"Where?"

"There, just south of the cornfield?"

I brought my glass to bear, and as promptly called Woodhull and Ross to my side, and each wrote at my dictation:

"GENERAL RICKETTS,—A line of skirmishers is advancing from the south beyond the cornfield at your left. I suggest you change front in that direction, and advance to the cornfield fence, concealing your men behind it. They will be enfiladed, but that can't be helped.

"LEW WALLACE."

"Make haste," I said to the orderly, giving him one of the duplicates and retaining the other.

Within five minutes the brigades were on their feet;



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

within another five minutes one of them was lying down behind the fence, while the other moved leisurely to take position on its left. The manœuvring brought both bodies into view from the west side of the river, and the gunners there were in nowise loath to profit by the advantage offered. This, of course, called Alexander and Wiegel into action.

The cannonading and the noise of bursting shells were furious—I had almost said infernal. Sympathy for the brave men under the iron rain racked me like a sharp pain; but, as said, the conditions were beyond help. The furrow had been begun; it was fast reddening under the plough; not for that, however, could I then cry stop.

Presently my attention was claimed by another sight. The cornfield of which I have spoken as on Ricketts' left—his front now—was wide. How many acres it contained I cannot say; but the crop was in mid-growth, luxuriantly green and high as a man's waist. At the fence of the farther side the skirmishers disappeared; in their place there now came a line extending the length of the field, and more. Clearing the fence, the new-comers halted in the corn to regain their alignment, then advanced. I could see guidons, and several flags with pale-blue crosses on red fields, and white stars in the crosses, signifying regiments.

"They are cavalry," I said.

"That's good!" Ross replied.

"Why so?"

"Horsemen afoot are easy for infantry."

"But they may be mounted infantry."

"I don't know any difference. A horse always spoils a good soldier."

I could not help retorting, "I haven't observed that a horse had done you any hurt."

Gaps had to be made in the fence for the passage of mounted officers. These, once through, galloped to their places. Then at a signal—a bugle-call probably—the array having attained its proper front, it started forward slowly at first; suddenly, after the passage of a space, arms were shifted, and, taking to the double-quick, the men raised their battle-cry, which, sounding across the field and intervening distance, rose to me on the height, sharper, shriller, and more like the composite yelping of wolves than I had ever heard it. And when to these were presently superadded a tempestuous tossing of guidons, waving of banners, and a furious trampling of the young corn that flew before them like splashed billows, the demonstration was more than exciting—it was really fearful; and, watching it, I understood as never before the old Vandal philosophy which taught that the sublimest inspiration of courage lay in the terrible.

A brave spectacle it was indeed; yet, as Marshal Roberts said of the charge of the Six Hundred, it was not war. I could not understand it; and whatever of admiration I felt as a beholder was lost in amazement, all because of one extraordinary feature—not a man engaged in it took time or thought it necessary to stop, though for an instant, and fire a shot! Through my glasses I could easily make out officers mounted and waving their swords, and, as I thought, cheering the line forward. What did they mean? One of them there must have been the chief; what did he mean? Did he know of what was before him? Or was he of the Southerners who, still sceptical of the courage of the North, imagined that all to be done now was to set up the yell, wave the flags, and go with a rush, and win?

My eyes dropped involuntarily to the fence—it was of rough rails—towards which the charge was coming.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

On the hither side of it, in the corners, I saw indistinctly what looked like daubs of blue pigment in spots darker for the shade covering them. I knew them to be soldiers—our soldiers. They lay ever so still, reminding me of hunters in a broad runway, the deer in sight and speeding down upon them. Here and there I could see men half-risen peering through the spaces between the rails—they were company officers. Behind them other figures in uniforms were standing by horses; and in them I recognized field-officers. One man was in his saddle—Ricketts. He drew all my attention. Everybody in his vicinity seemed waiting on him; and presently, like the rest, I was doing the same, waiting for the word that would call the daubs of blue pigment into life and deadly action. The bristling, noisy wave was drawing nigh and nigher. How close would he permit it to come? The word was his; was it not time to give it? He sat the horse like a block of wood, calm, indifferent. I could not see that he was even watchful. There was a noticeable fever in my blood which I tried to cool sucking more vigorously at the lemon, and saying to myself, "He knows his men, and what they can be relied upon to do."

We thus in observation were almost breathlessly silent, and for a reason: not only did our fortunes depend upon what was about to take place; we were witnessing a rare incident which might not come to us again though we lived a hundred years. And in our minds there was a flutter of questions: "What will be the effect of the fire? Will it hush the howling? Will it stop the rush?" I felt my flesh creep, imagining the annihilation that must follow its delivery.

I heard no command given; however, up rose the figures behind the fence, up as one man. I saw the gleaming of the burnished gun-barrels as they were laid upon



the upper rails. The aim taken was with deadliest intent—never more coolly. I could form no correct judgment of the distance, probably a hundred and twenty-five or thirty yards, then a ragged eruption of fire, and for an instant smoke interfered with the view.

“My God!” cried Woodhull. “They are all killed!”

With return of fair vision, we looked for the line. It had disappeared. Not a man of it was to be seen, only the green of the trodden corn, some horses galloping about riderless, and a few mounted officers bravely facing the unexpected storm.

“No,” I said, in reply to Woodhull, “they are not all killed. Give the fellows unhurt time to crawl along the furrows back to the fence, and you will see.”

There was a cheer, no doubt by whom given. Then succeeded a firing at will. More saddles emptied, other horses rushing madly about. And ere long the thitherward fence was darkened with climbers, under whom whole sections of the rails went down, so little did the fugitives stand upon the order of their going. A few minutes more and not a living thing could be discovered in the field. Even the masterless horses were gone; while the wounded, crouching close to avoid the pitiless rain of bullets in the air above them, lay under the corn hidden as by a mantle. And they and the dead—how many were there of them? <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A few years ago, during President McKinley's administration, General John B. Gordon and I accidentally met in the reception-room of the White House and were introduced to each other. He was then United States Senator. We took seats upon a sofa, and talked of the battle of Monocacy.

Among other things, General Gordon said he had long wished to know me, and in explanation stated that I was the only person who had whipped him during the war. I replied differing with him, and argued that while it was true I had accomplished the purpose for which the fight was made, still the possession of the field remained



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

So far victory. I sent an orderly to Ricketts with congratulations, and then consulted my watch.

### *High Noon*

Five hours from my very able antagonist, General Early! I counted them, beginning at seven o'clock, not once but many times, much as I fancy a miser counts his gold pieces.

I had leisure then to look about me.

In the mean time fighting had been going on up at the stone bridge. That General Tyler had not ordered Colonel Landstreet to his support argued well. Nevertheless, I sent Colonel Ross to see, and report upon the affair.

In my immediate front, across the river, skirmishing continued as in the morning, and the batteries there still maintained their fire, replied to by Alexander and Wiegel. I doubt if there was a nook or corner far up as the Thomas mansion, and beyond it even, that went free of search by shells thrown with singular skill.

to him. "In that sense," he insisted, "you are right; but you snatched Washington out of our hands—there was the defeat." And he continued, "The duty of driving you off the road fell to me; and I did it, but not until you had repulsed several attacks, and crippled us so seriously we could not begin pushing our army forward until next morning about ten o'clock."

In course of the conversation I remarked: "The strangest thing of the whole battle was the conduct of the officer who made the first attack upon General Ricketts. Did he imagine he could stampede veterans of the old Sixth Army Corps by a rush without fire?"

"Ah, that's the very point," Gordon replied. "We did not know of the presence on the field of any portion of the Sixth Corps. They told us in Frederick you had only hundred-day men, a class of soldiers we had often met and cleaned out without firing a shot—exactly as General —— attempted."

I found General Gordon remarkably frank and communicative, and a most delightful conversationalist. He took away with him my profoundest respect.

## LEW WALLACE

The circumstance of liveliest concern to me, however, was that, often as I turned my eyes to the roads trending southwardly from Frederick, they fell upon reinforcing columns of Confederates in steady march to the fords below the wooden bridge.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### LXXIV

The deserting engineer—The disabled howitzer—Burning of the wooden bridge—The telegram to Grant—The cowardly brigade—The skirmishers on the iron bridge—Lieutenant Davis—The beginning of the retreat.

I TRIED to estimate the strength of the forces in motion before me, but could not. Enough that they were as three to our one, and that when they came to stand upon our side of the river in order of battle all the advantages of the position which had been our strength would fail us utterly. It was ugly thinking of the odds; nevertheless, what I beheld settled at least one of the three objects for which I was making the struggle—General Early meant to possess himself of the pike Ricketts was defending, the undermeaning of which was Washington. Should I not say so to Generals Halleck and Grant? I again decided not yet. By burning the wooden bridge, and holding on till five or six o'clock, it would not be in General Early's power to move his main body before the next day. In other words, time then took first place in my purpose—twenty, or even twelve hours added to the two marches yet required of my doughty enemy would be ample for General Grant to land his interfering corps in the city. I resolved to hold on.

To General Ricketts I then sent word that, in the absence of ambulances, I had determined upon a train of cars to receive and carry off such of the wounded as could be moved; the train, I informed him, was in waiting behind the first hill east of the railroad bridge.

Therewith I suggested having his wounded taken thither while the lull in the fight permitted.

Within half an hour afterwards an officer came to me and reported that he had been to look for the train, and it was gone; the engineer, frightened by shells flying over the hill, had run away, taking every car with him.

It took me some time to recover from this blow. Indeed, could hands have been laid upon him, I think yet I could have stood quietly by and seen the cowardly wretch hanged. But there was no remedy. The hurt and the maimed must lie where they fell—in that respect like the dead. My keenest pang, I remember, was in the reflection that when the retreat took place—it looked more probable to me then than at any previous time—the unfortunates, few or many, must look to the enemy for care and relief, and that he, hampered by like sufferers of his own, might find his mercy too greatly strained.

### *One o'Clock*

At this hour all of the action going on was in my front across the river and up at the stone bridge. From the latter place nothing could be heard but the dropping fire of skirmishers; while here the air continued riven with shells.

Colonel Bliss, the corps commissary, came up from his storehouse near headquarters bringing a sackful of crackers and sardines, and, the lull permitting, we lunched. The colonel reminded me of a case of wine received by him the evening before from Baltimore bearing my address, a present from some friend possessed of the blessed gift of gentle remembrance. I disposed of his suggestion that we tap it then by thoughtlessly telling him to keep it for supper.

In the same interval of comparative calm, Colonel



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Ross reached me from up the river. He had found General Tyler in active oversight of his attenuated line. Off Crum's ford, about a mile above us, the enemy were assembled as if to attack; but the bluff was steep, and could be easily held by the two or three companies who had the locality in charge. Colonel A. L. Brown, he said, had his hands more than full, having the stone bridge and another ford beyond it to keep with but seven companies of his own regiment (the One Hundred and Forty-ninth Ohio) and Captain Lieb's mounted infantry. Ross said he had found the colonel with his command posted on the crest of a ridge on the Frederick side of the river. Attacked by a largely superior force, Brown had succeeded in repelling several charges supported by artillery, and was in good spirits. His hundred-day men were behaving splendidly.

So then, summing up, at one o'clock, notwithstanding the attacks received, we were exactly as in the morning, only there were now to our score against General Early *six hours*. The officers of my staff, with the exception of Colonel Ross, who was characteristically grave, were inclined to be jolly; a mood not possible for me to second because of a point that would not out of mind—the enemy was taking a great deal of time down at the ford. Either he was waiting for more men, or he had already so many that the ordering them for battle was troublesome. Profiting by the sad outcome of his first drive at Ricketts, he was of mind now to make a certainty of the second. With that idea I kept my glass in service, sweeping the whole southern section of approach.

### *Two o'Clock*

About two o'clock I noticed mounted men whom I took to be officers riding leisurely along the farther side

of the cornfield going east. Occasionally they stopped as if to survey our position. I spoke to the officers with me.

"There will not be much more delay. Yonder, I take it, is the man in chief command reconnoitring us."

Within five minutes the strangers disappeared. Presently I caught sight of flags and the gleam of muskets; then I made out an advancing line of battle with the river on its left. It halted, and while I was wondering at the halt, another body swung by companies left into line of its right; then another—and another—until the prolonged front outreached Ricketts' left, offering a dangerous lap.

The call on us for action was immediate.

I sent Colonel Catlin at speed to Ricketts, warning him, and suggesting that he put his whole command into one line; so only could he equalize the fronts.

At the same time an orderly hurried to Wiegel asking if he could not bring his howitzer to bear upon the Confederates in mid-manceuvre. The man returned to me on the run.

"The gun is disabled," he said.

"Disabled? How?"

"A green fellow serving it forgot the cartridge, and rammed a shell down first."

The effect upon me may be imagined. The howitzer alone was worth all Alexander's six rifles.

"Bring the horses," I said. "We must ride now."

I went first to Captain Wiegel, whom I found trying to inject powder into the vent of the piece—a makeshift requiring patience, and, in view of the practice of the enemy upon his little earthwork, enough of nerve to make a dozen Marlboroughs.

"Up-end the gun," I called to him.

"I've tried that; it won't do."

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Considering the howitzer lost to us—lost, too, when it could have done us infinite good—I continued on to the wooden bridge.

I stopped once to observe what was to be seen of Ricketts' readiness for the tempest before him. His Second Brigade appeared moving into place on the left of his First. The enfilading from the guns across the river was terrible. It swept his whole formation from flank to flank. I had a doubt if there could have been a more vigorous practice of artillery. Actually shells seemed to be in flight from every direction, and the horrible hissing and screeching they made in going were more dreadful to the imagination than were their explosions in fact. Then I heard infantry firing, and from the sound knew that this time the enemy was indulging no foolishness. I could not see him, but judged he had opened his fire five or six hundred yards away, and was keeping it up while advancing. As yet the men of the Sixth were not replying. They were waiting to make sure; in their grim silence I somehow took on another store of faith and confidence.

As said, I was going to the wooden bridge. My object was to release the guard taking care of it, that they might join their regiments, then never in such need of every available man, and I could see but one way of relieving them.

"Have you a match?" I asked the captain of one of the two companies there. "All right, apply it now."

He stooped to a pile of dry grass and kindling heaped against the inner face of the long-seasoned pine weatherboarding of the bridge. Just then I had a thought: "The skirmishers! My God, what will become of them?" I shouted.

Ross rode through the old structure to its farther

exit, and returned to tell me: "They are too far off to be reached. They will retreat at sight of the smoke."

At first a guilty sense touched me. The appearances of the thing looked so like a wilful desertion. Nevertheless, I reflected rapidly and with a clear head. The men were engaged. To have recalled them then would have been to endanger the bridge, possession of which by the enemy, certain to follow fast on their heels, would have been to admit him to the flank and rear of Ricketts' thousands on the hill. Hard, very hard, but the exigencies demanded loss of the few rather than of the many—or, rather, that the few must be left to take their chances with the foe in front or the river at their back. And thinking of the objects of the fight, my will grew hard as iron.

By that time the fire was blazing.

"All right, let it burn," I said to the captain of the guard, "and do you take your men with speed to your regiments."

They moved off on the run. I lingered awhile to see that the flames did their work reliably. A great smoke began to fill the sky and blot out the sun. Soon the floor timber fell into the water. The structure was then beyond salvation; whereupon we left it, and set out in return to our lookout above the block-house.

For the howitzer there was no redemption, and Wiegel had gone to Tyler. I had the piece hauled out of the contracted earthwork behind which it had done good service. It might be carried off when the final retirement took place.

The arrival of the Third Brigade had been promised me by one o'clock. I continued to look for it with an anxiety that intensified with the passage of the minutes. Three regiments—such was the composition of the brigade—three like these then with Ricketts—had been



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

worth full six in a time less serious. But they did not come. If I could only have got an order to the man in command!

The musketry had followed us with its peculiar noises, now a rattle, now a roll, up from the bridge; and, looking from our elevation, it was to see both the opposing lines engaged, that of the enemy and ours. A film of smoke whiter than morning mist hung over them; but it was only a film, transparent at that, and through it I could see the combatants, two or three hundred yards apart, and the flashing of twirling rammers, and the flags, and horsemen going to and fro. How busy they all were!

I remember the thrill I felt noticing the enemy brought to a stand-still along his whole front; then the thought, if the men of the "old Sixth" could do that much, it would not be strange if they yet did better.

Minutes passed. The firing became an unbroken roll. I could hear no sound else. Both sides were working under a repression too intense for cheering, a repression in which there could be but one intent—load, load, and fire, meaning kill, the more the better. Battle has no other philosophy.

Other minutes passed, and they seemed longer than any of the preceding, minutes during which the action grew so furious, so red-hot, as it were, I knew it was not in nature to continue. One line or the other must go to pieces.

The gunners out towards Frederick stopped; seeing the lines so close together, they doubtless feared doing their friends more harm than good. About that time, turning my glass to the southeast in the direction of the Thomas mansion, I saw a faltering on the part of the Confederates; it was very distinct—some of them were even running to the rear. This was well over towards their extreme right flank. It struck me a charge might

start the break I was so anxiously expecting. I sent Ross to Ricketts with the suggestion; and he, meeting an aide of Colonel Treux,<sup>1</sup> who knew the general's whereabouts, gave him the suggestion for delivery in the form of an order, and returned to me.

A consideration of the time required for the transmission of this order will help one to a fair idea of the obstinacy of the struggle in progress. There are moments in which the mythical old man with scythe and hour-glass seems to disport himself with men and their solitudes. I waited and waited, and while waiting thought of Father Weems's description of the ascension of souls at the Cowpens. At last two regiments—such they appeared to me—broke from the general line forward and advanced rapidly, firing and cheering as they moved. The effect was as if a sudden push had been given the enemy. They broke, resolved into a flying mass, and directly the whole opposing formation, catching the contagion of retreat, was going headlong in search of safety. I could see mounted officers raging in the rout, but in vain. The first triumph of the heroic "old Sixth" had taken place in a cornfield; this second one was scored in a wheat-field but recently reaped. Looking over it after the disappearance of men and flags in a woods on its southern boundary, the shacks were all down, and here and there, not infrequently either, there were black objects interspersed with the yellow sheaves; but whether they were of the dead or wounded, or of both, could only be surmised.

The shouting of the elated victors was long and loud.

<sup>1</sup> Captain W. H. Lanius. See *Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania Volunteers*, p. 182. The captain, it would appear, thought the time too short to advise with General Ricketts. In my name he ordered the Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania and the Fourteenth New Jersey to make the charge. Had it been less brilliantly done, with results more unquestionable, he might have heard from General Ricketts.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Landstreet's Eleventh Maryland, off a short distance to our right rear, arose to their feet and yelled with might and main. And we helped them all we could—I with my staff and orderlies. The expression may sound homely, but I could have hugged the two regiments that did the valorous deed. Then, in the very heat of our rejoicing, we were made to know that there were spectators whom we had not counted upon possessed of different emotions. The Confederates serving the scattered guns in battery beyond the river turned them upon our height and shelled it with a spite and venom not to be misunderstood. Again by the greatest good-fortune we all escaped harm, for which thanks were chiefly due to our elevation above the gunners. When the flurry was over I detached two of General Tyler's three pieces, sending them to Captain Alexander. They were doing no good where they were; perhaps he could make them useful.

I looked at my watch, and it was

### *Two-forty-five o'Clock*

—that is, it had taken Ricketts about forty minutes to dispose of this second attack; and forthwith I put them in the column of time against General Early, much as one hungry for a smoke puts pinches of tobacco in his pipe. Nearly eight hours now! Thus mentally I summed up.

There came then another spell of quiet, save only the gunners maintained their practice and the skirmishers kept belligerently spitting bullets at one another. I noticed this latter phase of the fight particularly. In their cover—a hollow in the ground or patches of weed and grass—the combatants, crouching low or flat on their backs, loaded their pieces; then, on their knees,



they watched the irregular front offered by the enemy, and often, as a faint, white puff arose and was vanishing in the air, they fired aiming under it. Now and then the black smoke driving before the south wind from the burning bridge spread over that part of the valley, obscuring the exciting game; when it lifted, however, I could see our troops were retiring slowly back towards the river. And it was plain to me that the officer in charge, whoever he might be, understood the business engaging him, and had no thought of surrender. But the scheme of escape he nursed—what could it be? I failed to fathom it. If the big brass howitzer had been in condition, his rescue had been easy. This, it is worth saying, was absorbing to a degree to make me unmindful of other things in themselves very interesting. A cloud of dust on the road from Frederick at length drew me from it; then, in a short time, I made out a column of infantry in rapid movement going to my left by the same thoroughfare taken by their friends in the morning—reinforcements beyond question. While my glass circulated among the staff-officers, I reflected.

Should I get away? That were less difficult then. The enemy was undiscoverable in the fields or in the woods beyond them, and it would take an hour or more for the reinforcing column to cross the ford, particularly as it was followed by two batteries of four guns each. Another half-hour would be consumed in deploying the regiments into line with their brethren and getting the batteries into position. The time was ample, and it made the opportunity. I took no thought of self; but of the brave men here and there on the field, how many might pay the extreme penalty of delay? The urgency compressed debate into the narrowest limits and forced me to a decision.

I summoned Woodhull and Ross to my side and



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

dictated—first, a telegram to General Grant, at City Point. Of this, both the duplicates having been lost, I can only give the substance:

“MONOCACY JUNCTION, MARYLAND,  
“*July 9th, 3 P.M.*

“I have been fighting General Early here since seven o'clock. With General Ricketts' aid have repulsed two attacks. A third and heavier is making ready. It is evident now he is aiming at Washington. He has been fighting us with eighteen or twenty thousand men, and has others, apparently a corps, in reserve, with field artillery in proportion. If you have not already strengthened the defensive force at Washington, I respectfully suggest the necessity for doing it amply and immediately.”

This I followed with a message to General Halleck, stating the fighting had, the result, and the probabilities—that the indications all were of an attempt on Washington; that Early had been actually engaging me with eighteen or twenty thousand infantry; that he had cavalry and artillery in full complement, with a body in reserve, apparently a corps.

The truth is, I worded the latter telegram thinking to scare General Halleck into action—he was, in my opinion, so constitutionally slow, if not timid.

The flight of the telegraph operator put me out sadly. As the next best thing, the only one in fact, I had Ross go look at the horses and bring me the best for the service; then to the owner I gave the messages, with directions to ride to Monrovia, or the nearest point on the railroad at which there was a telegraph-office and an operator. He was further instructed to see that the business had precedence of everything else, and to stand by the operator during the transmission; or, if that individual delayed or hesitated, he was to be

threatened with President Garrett. The horse was not to be spared.

Then I sent to General Ricketts, requesting him to come to me for consultation.

About that time General Tyler passed up a courier, reporting that Colonel Brown was still on the west side of the river, holding his own. There was comfort in the report. Retreat was still possible.

General Ricketts responded promptly. The good soldier was dusty—hair, beard, and uniform—and red with heat and perspiration. He would have dismounted, but I told him to keep his saddle as long as the gunners over the river were disposed to let him alone.

"You did that very handsomely," I said, alluding to the repulses of the enemy.

"Thank you," he returned, wiping his face with his handkerchief.

The column of Confederates was yet in sight. I pointed to it.

"Guns?" he said.

"Yes, two four-gun batteries."

"Well, that means a division at least"; and he added, "God knows there were enough of them already."

"We can get away now," I then said. "Shall we go? What do you say?"

"What time is it?"

I looked at my watch, and replied:

*"Three-thirty o'Clock."*

"A while longer" — he spoke deliberately — "and Early can't move before morning; and, if what I am told is true, that the ford is very rocky, it will be noon before he can get his artillery across the river."

"You are willing to stay, then?"

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Yes, at least until they show us what they have next. After whipping them twice, I don't like to run away."

"That is natural," I said; "and I am with you in opinion about holding on, but for another reason; and that is the other point about which I wanted to see you. Your Third Brigade is some hours overdue. What is the matter with it?"

Ricketts' brows contracted as he answered: "I don't know. If I live, I will know."

"He had his orders?"

"Yes, and cars in plenty."

"You don't know that he will not come?"

I saw the subject was exasperating him, and closed it, remarking: "The arrival of the brigade would be good when we have to retreat. As a rear-guard it would be infinitely serviceable. I will wait for it."

Ricketts swallowed his wrath and said: "Very well. When you think our time is up, let me know."

"I will send you the order."

And then I again explained that the retreat would be by the country roads north to the Baltimore pike; thence towards Baltimore.

"Do you need a guide?" I inquired.

"No. I can find the road."

"We understand each other, then?"

"Yes."

"As everything will depend upon the bridge on the Baltimore pike, it shall be held, if possible, until your command gets stretched out behind it."

"That will do," he said, gathering up his bridle-reins.

"Good-bye."

And he replied, "Good-bye"; then added, "If you see us coming back before your order reaches me, you should understand it is because we are out of ammunition."

"Is it getting low?"

"Yes, in some of the boxes. I have just had an inspection."

"God forbid!" I said.

"Yes, it would be ugly."

And with that he rode down the height to his command.

This conversation, condensed but substantially given, can hardly be misunderstood; so I leave it with the remark that General Ricketts and I were coincident in the opinion that we would be compelled to acknowledge the superiority of the enemy by yielding him the road to Washington. At the same time, we were both of a mind to tempt fortune by holding on yet longer—he partly out of soldierly pride, and I in the hope that his Third Brigade would arrive in time to cover the retreat. We were both agreed, moreover, that by persisting in the struggle it might be possible to make it noon next day before General Early could continue his march. At all events, I have always thought, and still think, the result justified me in the course taken. This is said with reference to my responsibility as ranking officer.

The withdrawal of an engaged line of battle is always a most difficult and dangerous resort, because it is so easy to turn it into an irretrievable rout; here, however, it was to be a thing of execution by veterans, and the reflection made me several degrees more hopeful. Nevertheless, I foresaw confusion, especially if the enemy was vigorous in making the most of his advantage, and I tried to determine how to reduce its probable consequences to a minimum of disaster. With that idea I sent for General Tyler and Colonel Landstreet.

General Tyler, it will be recollected, had command of all north of the railroad, including the stone bridge on the pike from Frederick to Baltimore. To him, in Landstreet's hearing, I exposed what was intended and in expectation. He received the explanation calmly, saying



he was willing to do his utmost in making the retreat a success, only he wanted to know what I wanted him to do.

"You know the road to the Baltimore pike," I said, "the only one by which Ricketts can bring his brigades off after withdrawing them, is narrow, rough, and for the most part through woods, all too narrow, in fact, to accommodate a column hard-pressed and in hasty movement. So the probabilities are that, instead of sticking to the road, individuals are certain to take courses for themselves until they gain the pike. There they will have become a mass more or less disordered; and, until they have time to reform, somebody must defend them from pressure and rear attack. That work, general, you must do. In other words, upon you more than any other man I can think of it now depends whether we are not all enclosed in the woods and killed or taken like a herd of sheep?"

"You want me to hold the bridge?"

"Yes, until Ricketts and his men gain the pike and are advanced well towards New Market; in fact, I want it held until the enemy following Ricketts through the woods show themselves in your rear."

"And then?" he asked.

"Let your men cut their way out, all who can—not a difficult thing to regiments like Gilpin's and Brown's, since the pursuers will be in disorder and few in numbers when they reach the pike. Should there be any who cannot cut their way out, order them to disperse, every man for himself, with New Market or Monrovia for rendezvous. It will be desperate work. What do you say?"

I watched General Tyler closely; and there was revelation of the man in his answer, simple, without bravado, unmelodramatic: "I will go to the bridge now, picking up my men on the way. They will not be needed except at the bridge."

"That reminds me," I said. "You have had two companies of Colonel Brown's regiment guarding the block-house here. Take them along with you."

"But what of the house?" Tyler asked.

I answered: "If only to deprive the enemy of the pleasure of burning it, I will burn it myself. Have your companies take out their movables immediately, and let them look after the howitzer."

Then I requested him to stay and hear what I had to say to Colonel Landstreet. That gentleman came to attention and saluted. He was not wanting in the technique of military manners. Still, it was very needful for me to be careful with him.

"You will take your regiments, marching rapidly, to the Baltimore pike," I said. "There turn to the right in the direction of Baltimore, and, when two miles out, halt, deploy, with your colors in the centre of the road, and face to the rear. Our men will come to you in numbers, disorganized, of course. Stop all of them who have guns and cartridges—stop all officers and make them help you rally the fugitives. Tyler, here, will have ultimately to abandon the bridge. When that takes place, cover his retreat as best you can, moving along the pike and halting when required to stay the pursuit." I wound the instructions up by what I thought an appeal to his pride. "In short, colonel, I mean your regiment to become our rear-guard, an important and, under the circumstances, a most honorable duty."

He saluted again, and, answering with confidence, left me, and shortly after was seen in the saddle leading his regiment from the height. Not long after General Tyler picked up his two companies and rode away.

I had now exhausted every resource, even to the last man; and again there was nothing for me but to wait on the enemy; *that*, however, was made appreciably easier

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by a feeling that he had given me time to do all possible for his reception, and that it had been done. A bitter pang struck me thinking of Ricketts' Third Brigade, so unaccountably absent. Where was it? Who held it back? Cowardice or treachery—which? In how many ways it could have been made useful in the extremity upon me!

### *Four o'Clock*

Meantime the firing had almost ceased. Only at intervals a tentative shell spanned the field, leaving an arch of sound behind it. Once in a while, also, the skirmishers indulged in a spurt. Their fitful *rattling*, what moments it claimed my attention, left it evident that our people were crawling slowly back towards the river, and forced the reflection—what were they to do, what *could* they do, when the river was gained?

The men of my staff had nothing to say to me, and but little to one another. Like myself, they were impressed with the situation, and waiting. They knew as well as I that in all probability the preparation going on behind the screen of woods in the south would be decisive; and with them, as with me, the deliberation with which it was being conducted was ominous enough to edge their expectation with anxiety. Occasionally they remitted their watchfulness to follow the sound of a shell flying invisibly over the fields, golden-yellow with the ungarnered harvest of the respectable owner of the mansion fair to view in the southeast.

For my own part, I entertained myself with my watch, in hand the while, and with the small mental operation of counting the time from seven in the morning to the fraction of the hour of the observation.

"Eight o'clock" — and sometimes I counted the minutes.

Sometimes I varied the form of the calculation, saying to myself: "Eight hours and a quarter—or a half, or so many minutes. Early will not take to the road to-day, not even if he gets it. It is too late."

"Eight hours, and—!"

At moments, in my mind's eye, I could see my courier galloping through the white dust of the pike to the station, and there came a later moment when I said, still speaking to myself: "By this he has reached the station; now the message is off; now it is in Grant's hand, and, if troops are not already on the water, there is commotion at City Point, and much repetition around headquarters of the news. Early is marching on Washington. Washington is in peril!"

Four o'clock—at this point I turn to my official report for certainty—at four o'clock almost to the minute—four o'clock, in my account of time against General Early marking the ninth hour—and how I turned the finding over and over in my mind! The woods across the fields showed signs of renewed life. In the fringing of scattered trees, by looking closely, I could see what I thought moving figures. Now and then these appeared in patches of sunlight of greater transparency than the general mass of late afternoon shadows, helping my glass bring them distinctly to view—men with slouched hats, and in dust-colored clothes—very reliable telltales, all of them, but not to be compared in that respect to the flashes electrically emitted by gun-barrels suddenly sunstruck. I passed the glass to the officer nearest me, and said, simply:

"They are coming."

And then to an orderly, the horses having been again taken down the hill: "Bring up the horses. We may have to ride."



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Yes," said Colonel Catlin, after a long look, "they come, and no mistake."

"Only see how long the line is!" said another of my officers.

And sure enough, out of the ragged fringe of trees there came a thin line of skirmishers—I say *line* out of grace, for there was no "dressing on guides"—that extended from the river up to the Thomas mansion, and beyond it, though how far I could form no idea on account of obstructions to the view; far enough, however, to overlap the extreme left of Ricketts' left regiment. And then, was the extension of the skirmishers a proper measure of the front of the main line advancing behind it? My hope, already faint, began shrivelling up like a child's rubber balloon while the air goes whistling out through an unlucky rent.

I turned the glass to where Ricketts was in holding, his brigades lying down, and looking for the most part like a far-stretched blue thread. The regiments on his left—two it seemed—were on the run, taking intervals in the direction of the Thomas house, a desperate expedient, but the only one left the good soldier, conscious of the necessity of saving his flank by equalizing fronts as best he could. But how thin the formation looked! I shivered, thinking of what would happen to it in the face of the rush of a solid line of battle.

And presently the slouch-hatted skirmishers began firing. Then, as at a signal, the battle broke from its leash. All the guns on the thither side of the river awoke, reminding me of sleeping dogs responding to a kennel-cry. And again, drowning the crackle of the more distant skirmishers, and the yelping, they searched the low places and the high everywhere behind, over, and in front of Ricketts. In the common crash above the block-house we were not considered unworthy spe-

cial attention. With a mighty *swishing*, comparable to nothing else I know of, though nearest the ragged tear of rushing locomotives, the missiles rent the air over our heads seemingly not more than an arm's-length too high. The tempest spent, we counted one another, thankful for another escape; and when I got a breathing time to give attention to the situation in the field proper, the skirmishers were giving place to a line of battle emerged from the woods, and reaching from near the river's bluff out of sight almost solidly. I saw the flags in furious waving, and the mounted officers galloping to and fro in the rear. Then I became interested in the number of regiments moving into action, and while trying to count the flags in sight, the whole long array under them began firing. This brought them to a slower movement; whereupon a misty, pale-blue envelopment which I knew to be musketry smoke dimmed them to the eye; while out of it arose the inevitable "*Yelp, yelp, yelp,*" a vent to battle passion strangely unlike that of any other of the great fighting Anglo-Saxon families.

I turned my glass anxiously upon the blue showing of Ricketts' line. The ground it occupied was friendly, being in many places broken by rain-washed ditches and shallow irregularities, precious nevertheless to old soldiers rich with the wisdom of many battles. And now these, on their bellies or knees, half-hidden, were countering the comparatively harmless fury of the tempest sweeping over them. Their flags, though hazy in the rising smoke, were in display clear to the Thomas mansion, and they were so steady in their uprightness, so motionless, I knew their sharp steel shoes had been driven into the earth *to stay*. Occasionally the folds blew out in the breeze, and what touches of roselike color the scene then borrowed from them!

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Bringing my observation down closer to the standpoint I occupied, I noticed next a bare space of a hundred or more yards between the regiment on the extreme right of the line and the river. Slowly and inadvertently the formation had drawn itself leftward. The discovery was the more disquieting, since I could not soothe myself with a hope that the enemy would fail to see the lapse and hurry a battery into it. While thinking what to do, a cheering and an outburst of musketry arose beyond the railroad bridge; and looking thither, a sight broke upon me in the stress of which all interest else was for the moment smothered.

I looked, as did my officers, and we were all astonished—I never more so.

In the allusion to the skirmishers in the direction of Frederick, a page or so back, I described them as shifting from their original position by crawling back towards the river, with what hopeful purpose I could not make out. Hours had come and gone, hours of painful retirement, during which the good men, undiscouraged, undaunted by the abandonment so discernible after the burning of the wooden bridge, literally wormed themselves off the field, stopping at intervals to fight the enemy off, and keeping the railroad bridge always in mind. Now they had reached the bridge. By what signal I do not know, not unlikely by spontaneous impulse, they sprang up, and, unmindful of exposure, made a dash for liberty. And when I saw them they were on the bridge coming.

To judge this feat, and what of courage there was involved in it, the reader should keep in thought that the great steel structure was of goodly length, sixty or sixty-five yards at least, and unfloored, leaving passage over it afoot along cross-ties and girders. Nor should one's fancy stop there. Quite forty feet below the adventur-



ers ran the water swiftly enough to make the head swim, and only too ready to catch a sufferer falling, and hide him in its remorseless, dark-brown current. Danger upon danger—and yet another. Every step taken was under fire of antagonists pressing forward furious at sight of the possible escape. Such the spectacle presented to us spellbound on the hill!

We saw two or three hundred reach the bridge—we saw them on the ties stepping short and carefully, as they needs must—we saw them from habit form in column order, not crowding, or pushing, or struggling to pass one another, or yelling. Now and then we could see one stop short, let go his musket, throw up his hands convulsively, and with a splash disappear in the stream beneath. Some of these may be there now unrecovered, buried forever in the whelming sand and silt. How many were thus overtaken may never be known. *Missing* was the simple record written on the next muster-roll over against their names. Fortunately, though holding the moving files in plain view, the artillerymen mercifully refrained from firing.

We watched the coming breathlessly; and when the crossing became assured I was the first of my party to speak.

“Hurry down,” I said to Colonel Catlin, “and meet those men. The man in command is brave. I should like to know his name.”

Catlin went running.

Upon our shore the fugitives halted, and while some of them turned for a last shot at the enemy, the others swung their caps and cheered, then reformed and in perfect order marched away as I supposed to their commands. I have not words to express my admiration. Enough that I cannot now recall an incident of occurrence under my eyes more desperate in the undertaking,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

yet more successful in outcome. From every point of view it was heroism.

Colonel Catlin brought me the name of the leader—Lieutenant George E. Davis, of the Tenth Vermont Infantry.<sup>1</sup>

“Lieutenant?” I said. “Only a lieutenant! There were captains over there. Where are they?”

I had this answer:

“The first companies were hundred-day men of Colonel Brown’s, green in service, officers and privates. When Lieutenant Davis arrived, Brown’s captains voluntarily offered to put themselves under his orders.”

“Old or young?”

“As handsome a boy as I ever saw.”

“You should have brought him to me.”

“I suggested that,” the colonel replied, “but he begged to be excused. His regiment was fighting, and he had not the time.”

I followed the little column until it was out of sight in the low grounds by the old mill.

The battle, when I again reverted to it, was still in fierce progress, with the Confederates brought to a stand-still; a circumstance that was giving me great satisfaction, when Colonel Ross, whose blue eyes were clear as a baby’s, and singularly far-sighted, spoke up in his quiet way: “There, in the edge of the wood beyond the cornfield, what is it?”

We all followed his pointing, I with my glass. One quick glance was enough.

“A second line, as I live. Here—what say you all? Look!”

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Davis is yet living, a universally respected citizen of Burlington, Vermont. He was discharged at the end of the war a captain, a rank altogether disproportionate to his merits.

## LEW WALLACE

The glass made the round. The men agreed with me. Every face showed excitement.

"They are halted, and waiting," I said; "and that means reserve."

Then Ross spoke again.

"Still another line! Look! It is in motion in rear of the one in the edge of the timber. I see brass pieces, and horses on the left. They are just coming up."

My heart jumped into my mouth. There could be no question about the new appearances. What was to be done? The call was for prompt action. It was no longer mine to say when Ricketts and his stubborn regiments should be brought off. They must go now. Heaven grant it was not too late! I thrust the glass into my pocket.

Calmly as I could I looked at my watch. My recollection is that the hands stood at

### *Four o'Clock and Twenty Minutes*

The shadows of the sun were stretching out, telling of evening and night, of the day almost gone. A sense of relief came to me: if the day was lost to me, General Early might not profit by it. Measured by his designs, and the importance of time to his cause, my loss was scarce worth a pinch of good old Scotch snuff; and so thinking, I betook myself to action.

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And here the Autobiography ends. What follows must be a plain record of facts without attempt at polish or effect.

Whatever merit it may have belongs to my friend, Mary H. Krout, whose careful work has made this continuation possible.

SUSAN E. WALLACE.

## PART II

## I

The retreat towards Baltimore—Clendenin's capture of the Night Hawk Rangers' flag—Burning of the block-house and supplies—The night with Ricketts—Superseded by Ord—Return to Baltimore—Grant's tribute in the *Memoirs*—Visit to Grant at City Point, September 12, 1864.

A GENERAL summary of the enforced retreat, upon the appearance of the enemy in overwhelming numbers, is thus told in General Wallace's report to the War Department concerning the operations of his command at Monocacy:

"I ordered General Ricketts to make preparations and retire to the Baltimore pike. About four o'clock he began the execution of the order. The stone bridge held by Colonel Brown now became all important; its loss was the loss of my line of retreat, and I had reason to believe that the enemy, successful on my left, would redouble his efforts against the right. General Tyler had already marched with his reserves to Brown's assistance, but on receipt of notice of my intention, without waiting for Gilpin and Landstreet, he galloped to the bridge and took command in person. After the disengagement of Ricketts' line, when the head of the retreating column reached the pike, I rode to the bridge, and ordered it to be held at all hazards by the force then there, until the enemy should be found in its rear, at least until the last regiment had cleared the country road by which the retreat was being effected. This order General Tyler obeyed. A little after five o'clock, when my column was well on the march towards New Market, an attack on his rear convinced him of the im-



practicability of longer maintaining his post. Many of his men then took to the woods, but by his direction the greater part kept their ranks, and manfully fought their way through. In this way Colonel Brown escaped. General Tyler, finding himself cut off, dashed into the woods, with the officers of his staff, and was happily saved. His gallantry and self-sacrificing devotion are above all commendation of words.

"The enemy seemed to have stopped pursuit at the stone bridge. A few cavalry followed my rear-guard to within a couple of miles of New Market, where they established a picket-post. The explanation of their failure to harass my column lies in facts that have since come to my knowledge—viz, Johnson's cavalry was marching at the time of the battle towards Baltimore *via* the Liberty road, while McCauseland's was too badly cut up in the fight for anything like immediate and vigorous action after it. To have cut my column off at New Market, the rebels had only to move their cavalry round my right by way of Urbana and Monrovia. Expecting such was his plan, I used the utmost expedition to pass the command beyond that point. The danger proved imaginary. The reinforcements for which I waited so anxiously the last two hours of the engagement reached Monrovia in good time to have joined me, but halted there—a singular proceeding, for which no explanation has as yet been furnished me. Monrovia is but eight miles from the battle-ground. The commanding officer at that place must, therefore, have heard the guns. But besides this Colonel Clendenin was effectually contesting the road which offered the enemy the advantage I have mentioned. That gallant officer, as true a cavalry soldier as ever mounted a horse, while fighting on Ricketts' extreme left, found himself cut off from the main force at the time the retreat began. Throwing himself into the village of Urbana, he repeatedly repulsed the pursuing rebels, and in one charge, sabre in hand, captured the battle-flag of the Seventeenth Virginia. The three regiments in Monrovia joined me at New Market, and after-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

wards served a good purpose in covering the march of the weary column, which bivouacked for the night about twelve miles from the battle-field. It would be a difficult task to say too much in praise of the veterans who made this fight. For their reputation and for the truth's sake, I wish it distinctly understood that, though the appearance of the enemy's fourth line of battle made their ultimate defeat certain, they were not whipped; on the contrary, they were fighting steadily in unbroken front when I ordered their retirement—and all the shame for this, if shame there be, is mine, not theirs. The nine regiments enumerated as those participating in the action represented but three thousand three hundred and fifty men, of whom sixteen hundred were missing three days after, killed, wounded, or prisoners—lost on the field. The fact speaks for itself. Monocacy on their flags cannot be a word of dishonor.

“As to General Ricketts, attention is respectfully called to the mention made of him in the telegraph report<sup>1</sup> sub-

<sup>1</sup> Early in the morning of the 9th instant, the enemy moved out of Frederick City, and in skirmish order began to fight. About nine o'clock he opened upon me with artillery, his guns being Napoleons, or twelve-pounder howitzers, and mine one six-gun battery of three-inch rifled guns, with one twenty-four-pounder howitzer. His column of cavalry and artillery worked rapidly round to my left and crossed the river in face of my guard, and charged confidently upon Brigadier-General Ricketts, Third Division, Sixth Army Corps. The general changed front and repulsed them, and charged in turn and drove them gallantly. The enemy then advanced a second line. This the general also repulsed and drove. Meantime the enemy placed at least two batteries in position, so that when he made his final charge with four lines of infantry, about 3.30 P.M., the resistance of Ricketts' division was under an enfilading fire of shell really terrific. The moment I saw the third rebel line advance I ordered the general to make such preparations as he could, and retire his command by a country road up the river to the Baltimore pike. This was accomplished with an extraordinary steadiness. The men of the Third Division were not whipped, but retired reluctantly, under my orders. They bore the brunt of the battle with a coolness and steadiness which I venture to say has not been exceeded in any battle during the war. Too much credit cannot be given to

joined. Every word of it is as deserved as it was bravely earned. If we had had intrenching-tools in time the losses of the veterans would have been greatly lessened. Another deficiency existed in the want of ambulances and wagons, but this I designed remedying by the use of the cars. That the dead and so many of the wounded were left suffering on the field, and in the hands of the enemy, is justly attributed to the base desertion of the railroad agent. I will also add that my despatches would have reached the War Office several hours sooner if the telegraph operator had remained at his post, or within calling distance. My intention upon leaving the battle-field was to march the troops directly to Baltimore, which, by the concentration at Monocacy, had been left almost defenceless. Had this purpose been carried out they would have reached the city on the evening of the 10th, in time to have driven off the marauders who, under Johnson, had moved by the Liberty road from Frederick City and taken post in the vicinity of Cockeysville. Such a result would very probably have saved the bridges on the Philadelphia railroad. But under an order received while *en route* to Ellicott's Mills directing me to 'rally my forces and make every possible effort to retard the enemy's march on Baltimore,' I thought it my duty to halt Ricketts' division with the cavalry and battery at the Mills, that being the first point on the pike at which it was possible to resupply the men with rations and ammunition. In doing this, however, I was careful to leave General Ricketts trains sufficient to bring his whole force away at a moment's notice, and as soon as it was certainly known that the enemy had marched against Washington, I ordered him to Baltimore. Before he arrived, however, I was temporarily superseded in the command of the troops by Major-General Ord.

"The evening of the 10th I returned to Baltimore and found the city in a state of alarm, occasioned by the ap-

General Ricketts for his skill and courage.—*War of the Rebellion; Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xxxvii., part i., p. 191.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

proach of Johnson's cavalry. Thanks, however, to the energy of Lieutenant-Colonel S. B. Lawrence, assistant adjutant-general, and Lieutenant-Colonel John Woolley, provost-marshal, every measure of safety had been taken that intelligence could suggest. The railroad communications north had been the former's special care. The means of defence for the city, as already shown, were very meagre, but the direction of them had, as soon as intelligence of the result on the Monocacy was received, very properly been assumed by Generals Lockwood and Morris, whose military experience was of great value. To the former I feel particularly grateful. Loyal citizens took up arms by the thousands, were organized, manned the works, and did soldier duty nobly.

"Besides the officers mentioned in my informal report of July 10th, the following deserve similar notice for their excellent behavior in action, and the services they rendered: Lieutenant-Colonel Lynde Catlin, assistant inspector-general; Major Max. V. Z. Woodhull, acting assistant adjutant-general; and Major James R. Ross, senior aide-de-camp, all of my staff; also Captain W. H. Wiegel, assistant adjutant-general to General Tyler; Captain Adam E. King, assistant adjutant-general to General Ricketts; Captain Brown, First Maryland Home Brigade, and Captain H. S. Allen, of the company serving as mounted infantry.

"General Ricketts has not yet forwarded his official report. When received I shall promptly transmit it to the War Office.<sup>1</sup> It will doubtless disclose many other officers properly entitled to special mention. At this time I can only speak of commandants of brigades and regiments whose names have been already given, and repeat the commendation they have won from commanding officers in many a former battle. They are of the soldiers whose skill and courage have ennobled not merely themselves, but the army they have belonged to so long. The sub-

<sup>1</sup> Ricketts' report not found.



## LEW WALLACE

joined report <sup>1</sup> contains my opinion of the rebel strength forwarded by telegram the day after the battle. Information since obtained corroborates that opinion. It is now well assured that General Early attacked me with one whole corps, not less than eighteen thousand strong, while General Breckinridge, with two divisions, remained during the battle in quiet occupancy of Frederick City. It is also certain, as one of the results, that notwithstanding the disparity of forces, the enemy was not able to move from the battle-field, in prosecution of his march upon Washington, until the next day about noon.

"As to the casualties I regret that the speedy movement of some regiments of General Tyler's brigade made it impossible for him to perfect his report as he himself desired. The aggregate shows a heavy loss, illustrating the obstinate valor of the command. I am satisfied, however, that the casualties of the rebels exceeded mine. To reach this conclusion one has only to make a calculation based upon the fact that the day after the battle over four hundred men too seriously wounded to be carried away were captured in the hospital at Frederick City.

"Orders have been given to collect the bodies of our dead in one burial-ground on the battle-field, suitable for a monument upon which I propose to write, 'These men died to save the National Capital, and they did save it.'

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"LEW WALLACE,

"Major-General Commanding.

"*Colonel E. D. Townsend, Assistant Adjutant-General.*" <sup>1</sup>

Among those who took a conspicuous part in the battle of Monocacy was Colonel William H. Seward, son of Secretary Seward. It was reported that he had been wounded and taken prisoner, and a telegram to

<sup>1</sup> *War of the Rebellion; Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series i., vol. xxxvii., part i., Reports, Correspondence, etc., p. 191.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

that effect was sent his mother. The day afterwards General Wallace sent the following message:

“ELLCOTT’S MILLS, *July 10, 1864.*

“*Mrs. William H. Seward:*

“I have the pleasure of contradicting my statement of last night. Colonel Seward is not a prisoner, and I am told is unhurt. He behaved with rare gallantry.”

General Wallace has given in detail an account of the capture of the regimental flag of the Seventeenth Virginia Cavalry, the “Night Hawk Rangers,” which he mentions in his official report to the War Department.

“His [Clendenin’s] men had been covering the ford dismounted. Taking to their horses they began a retreat which was a marvel of cavalry manœuvring.

“The road was by the Washington pike to Urbana, a village of nearly three hundred inhabitants, with one main street and intersections. The country on either hand was cultivated. . . . Occasionally the rail fencing was broken by a stretch of open. The farm-houses were unpretentious; and so accustomed had the people in the vicinity become to the coming and going of troops, that many of them, notified of the battle by the guns, now stood about their doorways, calm, curious, and apparently impartial spectators of the passage-at-arms so obligingly brought to them by fortune. Past the open place Clendenin carried his men at full speed. Coming to stretches where his flanks were secured by the fencing, he formed his rear company into sections or platoons, as the width of the road permitted; so with equalized front, the carbine fire he opened upon the enemy checked his advance; then, when the latter dismounted, had thrown down the rails right and left, he resumed the retreat. Where the dusty roadway crept up a height, he presented a line on the summit, and held the advantage until a flank was again menaced. His command was finely mounted, and composed of vet-

## LEW WALLACE

erans tactically perfect and used to combat; so a tyro can understand how, in the absence of artillery, the game he played was easy enough, and as he, too, was fighting for time—that is, to keep the Baltimore pike free for the passage of my column—the progress of his pursuers was necessarily slow and laborious.

“At last Clendenin reached Urbana, and tore through it hard as his horses could go. On a slight elevation beyond the last straggling house he halted and faced the troops in the rear in columns of sections. The village lay fair to view, and to appearances deserted. There was no obstruction in the main street, not so much as a wagon. The day was hot; his horses were jaded, and the men were suffering with thirst. He knew that what was true of his own people must be true of the enemy. Nobody was pursuing them. They could stop if it suited them. Would they stop? Would they break ranks and scatter in search of water and something to eat? The presence of the Yankees was nothing. Had they not been hunting them all day? He saw them come in. Presently they filled the street; then they broke ranks and sauntered off among the houses. This was what Clendenin wanted, and waiting coolly until the opportunity was fully ripe, he led his eager squadrons, sabres drawn, back into the town. From the walk to the trot, from the trot to the gallop, then at full speed, and, cheering, they charged down upon the gray and butternut medley.

“One Confederate officer sat his horse in the middle of the street. He was the first to see the coming storm. A bugle at his signal sounded the assembly, and snatching a flag from a man near by, the officer waved it shouting lustily. The rush to the banner was general, but formation was impossible. There was not time. Into the paralyzed mob the Federals burst, knocking out riders and men afoot, overturning horses, yelling like mad, and cleaving with vengeful fury. Clendenin spurred towards the gallant fellow with the flag. A pistol-ball outflew him. His opponent reeled in the saddle, and the flag-staff in his



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

dying hand fell forward, its point lodging in the flank of a horse. A moment after he measured his length in the dust; in another moment Clendenin, regardless of the press, dismounted and secured the trophy.

"The blow administered was so unlooked for and severe that the Confederates gave over the pursuit, and picking up their dead and wounded, and disposing of them, pushed on to Washington, leaving me to retreat unmolested.

"The officer slain, while making good the motto on his flag, was Major Boggs, of the Seventeenth Virginia Cavalry.

"A few days after the battle Colonel Clendenin brought the flag to me. I declined it, saying he had won it in combat against odds, and that he must keep it. He persisted, on the ground that as I had made the fight in the first instance, the trophies belonged to me of right, and that I must take and keep it as a lasting souvenir from him. He is now dead. In his *Memoirs* General Grant has been pleased to say that the engagement at Monocacy saved Washington City from capture by enabling him to get troops in to the defences. He also speaks of the Federal forces there engaged as a "forlorn hope." Be that as it may, certainly there was not a more fearless spirit in the action than Lieutenant-Colonel D. R. Clendenin, of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry.

"There have been a number of requests from surviving officers of the Seventeenth Virginia Cavalry for the flag, and from others as well, and it would have been returned long since but for the circumstances under which it came to me."<sup>1</sup>

The captured flag is thus described:

"The ground is in hue light red and the material woollen; the bordering is of white silk, the cross of light blue silk, the stars on the cross, thirteen in number, are of white

<sup>1</sup> *The Story of American Patriotism*, p. 582. The Saalfield Publishing Company, Akron, Ohio.



silk. Against the staff it is thirty-seven inches, and in length forty-two inches. On the right face is the name of the regiment — NIGHT HAWK RANGERS — and on the left face the motto — LIBERTY OR DEATH — all in tracery of flat white cording. The motto, it should be observed, is not regulation, but significant merely of the sentiment and devotion—possibly *passion* would be the better word—of the corps who acknowledged it. The lettering is Roman.”

Many years later, in discussing the battle of Monocacy with his son, General Wallace related the following incident:

“I ordered Ricketts by Major Ross to prepare to draw off to the Baltimore pike, and asked Colonel Bliss what rations we had. He replied:

“‘Rations for three days.’

“I ordered them burned, a match applied to the block-house, and our battery to occupy the best position to cover the retreat. Then, under a heavy fire, we rode over the railroad grade to Tyler and the stone bridge, explaining the necessity of holding it so as to cover Ricketts’ retreat. We then rode up to where the Baltimore regiments should have been, but they were not there. I waited until Ricketts came, and that night I bivouacked under the same blanket with him.

“As we retired up the hill I remarked to Ross:

“‘This is the last of me.’

“Ross, thinking I meant we would be killed in the fierce fire raining on us, and the delay from my slow horse, replied:

“‘Oh no, general, the Wallace luck will carry us through.’

“I did not mean that, but realized that Halleck now had the opportunity he had looked for. That night, under the blanket with Ricketts, a messenger came into

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the sleeping group calling for General Wallace. He delivered the message, which was from General Halleck, saying that we should concentrate at Ellicott's Mills and fight, if pursued; that General Ord was appointed to succeed me at Baltimore.

"Breakfasting with General Ricketts, an orderly came in with a silk flag which he reported to Ricketts he had found in a fence corner, and asked what disposition should be made of it. Ricketts ordered him to keep it for the present, as it was sure to be called for. Within the hour a party of officers came up and asked for their regimental flag. The flag found by the orderly was shown them, and they were asked by General Ricketts if that was it. They examined it, and replied:

"'It is.'

"'Very well,' said Ricketts, 'pay that man fifty dollars for finding it, and you can have it.'

"This was gladly done, and they departed with their colors. This was the last I saw of General Ricketts. He made it his first duty, later, to cashier the officer in command of the regiments that failed to come up, although within sound of the artillery, and who should have supported him."

In his *Memoirs*, General Grant thus acknowledges the service General Wallace rendered the Union Cause in the unequal contest at Monocacy:

"In the absence of Hunter, General Lew Wallace, with headquarters at Baltimore, commanded the department in which the Shenandoah lay. His surplus of troops with which to move against the enemy was small in number. Most of these were raw and, consequently, very much inferior to our veterans and the veterans which Early had with him; but the situation of Washington was precarious, and Wallace moved with commendable promptitude to meet the enemy at the Monocacy. He could hardly have

## LEW WALLACE

expected to defeat him badly, but he hoped to cripple and delay him until Washington could be put into a state of preparation for his reception. I had previously ordered General Meade to send a division to Baltimore for the purpose of adding to the defences of Washington, and he had sent Ricketts' division of the Sixth Corps (Wright's), which arrived in Baltimore on July 8th. Finding that Wallace had gone to the front with his command, Ricketts immediately took the cars and followed him to the Monocacy with his entire division. They met the enemy and, as might have been expected, were defeated; but they succeeded in stopping him for the day on which the battle took place. The next morning Early started on his march to the capital of the nation arriving before it on the 11th.

"Learning of the gravity of the situation, I had directed General Meade to also order Wright with the rest of his corps directly to Washington for the relief of that place, and the latter reached there the very day that Early arrived before it. The Nineteenth Corps, which had been stationed in Louisiana, having been ordered up to reinforce the armies about Richmond, had about this time arrived at Fortress Monroe, on their way to join us. I diverted them from that point to Washington, which place they reached, almost simultaneously with Wright, on the 11th. The Nineteenth Corps was commanded by Major-General Emory.

"Early made his reconnoissance with a view of attacking on the following morning, the 12th; but the next morning he found our intrenchments, which were very strong, fully manned. He at once commenced to retreat, Wright following. There is no telling how much this result was contributed to by General Lew Wallace's leading what might well be considered almost a forlorn hope. If Early had been one day earlier he might have entered the capital before the arrival of the reinforcements I had sent. Whether the delay caused by the battle amounted to a day or not, General Wallace contributed on this occasion, by the defeat of the troops under him, a greater benefit to the Cause

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

than often falls to the lot of a commander of an equal force to render by means of a victory.”<sup>1</sup>

Two months after the important service which he rendered the Union Cause at Monocacy, General Wallace accepted an invitation from General Grant to visit him at City Point. Of this visit he wrote his wife:

“HEADQUARTERS, BALTIMORE, *September 12, 1864.*

“... As to a change of place, I came back a day or two ago from the front, where I was received by General Grant with utmost cordiality and kindness. He talked freely and confidentially, rode with me wherever I wanted to go, and introduced me to everybody. In short, he seemed to be taking pains to make me forget that there had ever been anything of an unpleasant nature between us. And of course I made no allusion to the trouble in the past. We talked about Donelson, Shiloh, but never touched upon the differences connected with them. He acted as if there had been no differences, and so did I.

“I made no allusion to a command. Never having been in the Army of the Potomac, it is doubtful if a command in it would be desirable for me. Yet Grant at parting spoke of sending for me in case he made an offensive movement, and intimated that I could have the place of chief on his staff. As that would be very honorable, I shall take it if he formally offers it. . . .

“My relations with the War Office at Washington continue very cordial. Mr. Stanton seems satisfied with my management of the department. The adjutant-general says that I give them less trouble than any other department commander.”

<sup>1</sup> *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, vol. ii., pp. 304-306.



## II

Departure for Brazos Santiago—Letters from Vicksburg and New Orleans—Letters upon arrival—Private letters to General Grant—Conference with Ford and Slaughter—The situation in Matamoros.

WITH that foresight which was one of his remarkable characteristics, President Lincoln promptly prevented what might have led to a dangerous complication with the French in Mexico.

Maximilian was on the throne with the consent of European powers, President Juarez fleeing from place to place, his forces without supplies or the commonest munitions of war, many of the soldiers armed only with bows and arrows. General Wallace suggested to President Lincoln that it would be comparatively an easy matter for the Confederates in the Southwest to cross the border, taking advantage of the disordered condition of the country, and establish there an independent empire. Once intrenched in Mexican territory, they could have gone on warring against the United States indefinitely. To have fought them then, on their own ground, would have drawn the government into diplomatic entanglements with France, Spain, England, and other unfriendly foreign powers.

Early in January, 1865, General Wallace received a letter from an old school-mate, S. S. Brown, who had been living near Monterey, Mexico, a refugee from Texas. He called General Wallace's attention to the importance of Matamoros as a great commercial and financial centre, "feeding and clothing the rebellion, arming and equip-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ping, furnishing it materials of war and a specie basis of circulation in Texas that has almost entirely displaced Confederate money." Its importance was not alone trans-Mississippi, but the entire Confederacy was sustained by resources from that post. The French had begun operations in Mexico in 1862, Spain and England, their allies at first, having withdrawn. General Wallace was informed by his correspondent that the people were secretly opposed to the usurpers, and that "by judicious manipulation he felt confident that, could they be properly approached, they would, in opposition to foreign intervention, rally under the stars and stripes."

He wrote immediately to General Grant, who was with the army at City Point, Virginia:

"HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLE DEPARTMENT, *January 14, 1865.*

"*Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant, City Point, Va.:*

"DEAR GENERAL,—I had a visit yesterday from a Mr. S. S. Brown, formerly a school-mate of mine in Indiana, now a Texas refugee residing near Monterey, Mexico. Feeling assured of his reliability, but without giving him any idea of what was in contemplation, I drew from him a great deal of information about transactions in Matamoras, which at my suggestion he summed up in the enclosed note. You will not fail, I know, to appreciate his first sentence, wherein he describes the use the rebels are making of that city. There was one point in his conversation to which he reverted several times, and which was suggestive of a new idea. It was that if overtures were now made to them he believed the rebel soldiery in western Texas, particularly those at Brownsville, would gladly unite with us and cross the river under the Juarez flag. This belief he based upon the great disheartenment that prevailed all through the regions west of the Mississippi. Altogether, his remarks upon this point made a strong impression upon me. Recurring to my past letters, the greater conveniency of the route by the way of Brazos is self-apparent. Before

## LEW WALLACE

deciding anything, I submit to you, therefore, if it is not best to let me go and take a look at it, and see exactly what obstacles are in the way, and how they may be removed, if at all. The adoption of the Juarez flag on the bank of the Rio Grande as the basis of a compromise would stagger the Rebellion next to the giving in of the State of Georgia. It is worth a trial, anyhow. While Blair and Singleton are in Richmond, let me, from Brazos, upon my own authority, invite the commandant of Brownsville to an interview on the old battle-field of Palo Alto. If the man's a soldier I'll wager you a month's pay that I win, and that Blair and company lose. You know how to get me there—an order to make an inspection of affairs on the Rio Grande will do so. Such information as Brown's will, I think, fully justify examination. If it be found true, you may be in position, on report of the facts, to send me troops to smother the Brownsville-Matamoras trade. Then it will be my own fault if I don't get the arms through. Such an inspection ought not to consume more than a month. If you say so, McCook, who is now here, can take care of my department until results are had. If you send me, I will at least put you in possession of the situation in that region, and test fully the virtue of the rebel commandant at Brownsville. If I win him to my views all the bad luck will be to Maximilian. The handwriting of my friend Brown is so execrable, that to save you trouble I have illustrated it with pencil interlineations. Finally, general, if you think me persistent in the Mexican idea, please ascribe it to yourself. 'Hold on' is the lesson you are constantly teaching us. Had Butler served under you, as some of the rest of us have, he wouldn't have left Fort Fisher. Very truly your friend,

“LEW WALLACE, Major-General.”<sup>1</sup>

General Grant issued an order, January 22d, instructing General Wallace to proceed *via* the Rio Grande to

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xlviii., p. 512.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

western Texas and inspect the condition of military affairs in that vicinity and on the Rio Grande. Military authorities were to afford him every means in their power to facilitate him in the execution of this order.<sup>1</sup>

No stronger proof of General Grant's confidence in General Wallace could have been shown than in despatching him upon this difficult and dangerous mission invested with almost absolute authority. Thus authorized to proceed to Texas, he did not reach New Orleans until the latter part of February. From that point he wrote to the commander-in-chief.

“NEW ORLEANS, *February 22, 1865.*

“*Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant, Commanding Armies of the United States, City Point, Va. :*

“GENERAL,—After unavoidable delays, such as failures of connections, I at last reached this city, and now wait only for a vessel to carry me to Brazos. Arrived there it will take but few days to obtain all the facts necessary for a report on the relations, military and commercial, of Matamoras and Brownsville. From reliable information already at hand, I am justified in saying now that the statements of Mr. S. S. Brown, forwarded you from Baltimore, are in no wise exaggerated. Matamoras is to all intents and purposes a rebel port, free at that, and you can readily imagine the uses they put it to. There is never a day that there are not from seventy-five to one hundred and fifty vessels off Bagdad, discharging and receiving cargoes. I would have postponed writing to you, however, had it not been for a report in official circles to the effect that our consul at Matamoras has been ordered off by Mejia. That personage (the consul) will doubtless communicate the particulars to Mr. Seward, and I therefore refrain from sending a version of the affair, but venture to suggest that it might be well enough not to notice it until I can be heard

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, vol. xlv., part ii., p. 201.



from. In an unauthorized way I will endeavor to possess myself of the facts. Should they turn out serious, I am sure you will discern the policy of waiting until it can be seen whether the Mexican Republic cannot be put in position to fight its own and our battles without involving us, an eventuality exactly coincident with Mr. Seward's views. As to the prospects of such an eventuality, without going into details, I will say generally, but positively, that I have now an arrangement so complete that it will hardly be necessary for the government to loan me a gun, not even a pistol. This arrangement depends entirely upon your giving me command of Texas as a military department, with orders to report directly to yourself, and upon your sending me a division of infantry and a brigade of cavalry, with the ordinary complement of guns. The main body of these forces acting on the defensive, and posted at San Patricio, the lowest ford on the Nueces River, will completely sever communication between the Rio Grande and middle and eastern Texas. You served, if I am not mistaken, on the Rio Grande line, but I am not sure that you have a present recollection of the topography of the Nueces region. I will therefore venture to speak with some particularity of San Patricio. It is about twenty miles northwest of Corpus Christi. The road connecting the two points is on the right bank of the river, and always good. The west bank of the river is very bluff. The channel is deep but narrow. The east bank is low and level, and can be overlooked from the opposite bluffs fifteen or twenty miles. At San Patricio is a ford which is, so to speak, a great funnel through which everything going and coming from Matamoras, Rio Grande City (near Camargo), and Laredo (old Fort McIntosh) must pass; and of necessity, for the desert belt, called Mustang Prairie, makes the region between the Rio Grande and the Nueces ordinarily impassable for travel except by way of the few traces marked by springs. Of these traces there are but three at all useful to the rebels, because they are the only ones that strike the Rio Grande in a southwesterly direction. One begin-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ning at Laredo, another at Ringgold City, and the third at Brownsville, all of which unite about twenty-five miles from and west of San Patricio Ford. This rough description will enable you to see that if your object is simply to sever connection or communication between Mexico and Texas, it is only necessary to fortify San Patricio. This done, small garrisons can safely hold Brownsville, Rio Grande City, and Laredo, thus putting our government in position to let Maximilian very severely alone until I get my arrangements perfected. My purpose is to see, before the position of San Patricio is occupied, whether I can make accommodations with the rebels. If the intelligence at hand is true, success in this part of the enterprise is quite promising. My propositions will be based on cotton, which, together with the fading prospects of the Confederacy, has brought the rebels to a low point of demoralization. The way to a private interview with Kirby Smith is clear, and I shall act as if already appointed to the command of the Department of Texas. Conditions will, of course, be subject to approval, and forwarded to you instantly. If accommodations are impossible, and if, in consequence, it becomes necessary to occupy San Patricio, then, behind that position, and under its cover, I shall initiate the organization of the Territory or new State of Rio Grande, without which it will be difficult to find plausible pretexts for the assemblage of men and materials essential to ulterior operations. Permit me to hope, however, that you will not delay creating the department and despatching the troops. In selecting troops please send me Western men. You know how easily Southern men affiliate with them; and if the thing is at all possible it would give me additional confidence to have my old regiment, the Eleventh Indiana, and the Eighth Illinois Cavalry (Colonel Clendenin) ordered to report to me. I would also like the regiment of Texans now serving in the department. They know the region of western Texas perfectly. While passing through Indianapolis I succeeded in getting four hundred drilled conscripts for the Eleventh

## LEW WALLACE

Indiana, so that it will now be respectably strong in numbers. I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

“Your obedient servant,

“LEW WALLACE,

“Major-General, U. S. Volunteers.”<sup>1</sup>

Three days later (February 25th) General Wallace notified Colonel Christiansen, assistant adjutant-general at New Orleans, that a mail would leave the city that day at three o'clock for Matamoras. He pointed out to him the necessity of keeping his movements secret, which could not be done unless the mail be held back at least one week, which he asked should be ordered.

From Vicksburg, *en route*, he wrote to his wife, who was then in Washington:

“VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI, *February 17, 1865.*

“At Vicksburg, as you see—just think of it, nearly two weeks behind time! Yet I have done my best. Everybody is complaining of railroads and steamers; mad and impatient. The captain says we will reach New Orleans next Sunday afternoon. All we have to do is to be patient; and I must find a refuge in Spanish. For its study I have taken possession of the captain's state-room, where I slate irregular verbs early and late, by which conduct I am pronounced very unsocial. There are nice people aboard. The boat is slow, but the officers are obliging, the fare excellent, and the evenings are rounded with a dance in which I am represented by my staff-officers. A darky string-band furnishes tolerable music. Altogether, if time were not so important, I could get on very well. The only incident in relief of the monotony of the voyage has been in being fired into a few miles below Memphis. Several bullets pattered into our cabin, creating a momentary panic, an interruption of dinner, and the wounding of one poor soldier who will lose an arm in consequence. The

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xlviii., pp. 937, 938.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

other passengers at table could dodge under it, but I being in uniform had to sit straight and appear unconcerned. . . .

“General Morgan L. Smith, now commanding here, came to see me, and, offering his carriage, took me round a portion of the rebel works. I have just returned from the trip. On the scarred hill-tops, I not only saw traces of the great siege, but also found unmistakable signs of coming spring. The sun was summery warm, the air soft and pleasant, very unlike that which touches your face as you climb the steps of the Capitol. As I stopped to examine some of the caves in which the women and children took refuge from flying balls, I could see to what extremity a foolish people were reduced.”

He writes again from New Orleans:

“NEW ORLEANS, *February 24, 1865.*

“I came here supposing I could get away in two days, but the ill-luck which followed us from New York is still in hot pursuit. I found General Canby moving troops to Mobile and requiring every vessel. Not only that, a southwest storm has been raging, so that if we had a ship, necessity would have held us in the river. Now we are told we will certainly move by to-morrow. I hope so, for I have become tired of the St. Charles, all whose glories have departed. It runs itself literally, and the vermin almost devour me, and one imagines all the while the air he breathes is loaded with small-pox.

“I have been several times to visit Mrs. Canby, for whom I have a friendship, you know, which dates back to my motherless boyhood. Very few women have been so much admired and respected. The Speeds are here with the children, little and pretty.

“As to my particular duty, I have obtained a great deal of information in this city. I have lost so much time on the journey that all reckoning is out of my power. Nothing will now do but patience—patience, which I am fast beginning to know is the great virtue of life. I have been



## LEW WALLACE

out but little. Great curiosity is manifested about my business, and conjecture runs wild. The opinions of those who pretend to know are very amusing. So far, however, my destination has been well kept within the narrow official circle.

"A vessel, described as a fine one, will be placed at my disposal, where I shall quarter, if nothing better offers at Brazos. If we are not comfortable it will not be for want of preparation."

His first letters, written on board the *Clifton* after his arrival at Brazos Island, preceding his official report to General Grant, were also addressed to his wife:

"BRAZOS ISLAND. On board Steamer *Clifton*,  
"Sunday, March 5, 1865.

"It is one of the sweetest of days. The water is calm as calm can be; even the breakers beyond the bar come gently to shore as if they know it is Sunday. I shall send this by schooner to New Orleans, and I suppose it will reach its address some day, though it is not easy to say when.

"It is now nearly seventeen years since, with the First Indiana Volunteers, I landed at this same spot. And now I find the same bleak sand-hills, the same combing billows outside, the same birds, and the same sky, but not the same boyish soldier dreaming of fame. The comrades who then landed with me, how many are living? Alas! . . .

"I find on examination that reports of the extent of trade in progress at Matamoras are not exaggerated. From the deck of this steamer I can look towards the mouth of the Rio Grande, scarcely nine miles away, and see more vessels than are to be seen any one day in the harbor of Baltimore, all foreign vessels, loading and unloading cargoes, of which about one-eighth only goes legitimately into Mexico. The rest is consigned to Matamoras for the rebel authorities in Texas. Matamoras is crowded with goods—in fact, skilful judges say there are more in store

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

there than in the city of New Orleans. Another evidence of incompetency on our side.

"I am waiting to hear from my agents in Matamoras and Brownsville. It seems to be pretty well confirmed that the rebels are evacuating the latter place. We shall know to-morrow. I hope the inauguration is quietly over."

"BRAZOS SANTIAGO, TEXAS, *March 14, 1865.*

"The time drags slowly on. I have started negotiations with the rebel authorities in this neighborhood, which may result in something more than words. What I aim at now is nothing less than bringing Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana *voluntarily* back to the Union. The business is well begun, and at this moment looks promising.

"I met the Confederate officials at Point Isabel, just across the bay, and spent a couple of days and nights with them very pleasantly. We carried over our tents and cooks, and if our good people could have seen General Slaughter and myself lie down to sleep together, like Snowdoun's knight and Roderick Dhu, at Coilantogle Ford, I fear my character for loyalty would suffer in the esteem of some we know in old Montgomery. War has few amenities; let us snatch them while we may. This seems a deep breathing-spell to me.

"Perhaps in a few days I may go to Galveston. By the steamer which carries this, I send a full report of my transactions to General Grant."

"BRAZOS SANTIAGO, TEXAS, *March 14, 1865.*

"*General U. S. Grant:*

"GENERAL,—In a confidential way I will say that both Slaughter and Ford, with whom I had the interview which forms the subject of my general despatch of this date, entered heartily into the Mexican project. It is understood between us that the pacification of Texas is the preliminary step to a crossing of the Rio Grande. In the propositions made to them, a copy of which has been forwarded you, not a word is said about the arms now in the hands

## LEW WALLACE

of the Confederates. We expect to get their use. Neither can they see any reason why that portion of the cotton now in Texas, and belonging to the Confederate government, should not be diverted to the same purpose. Of this latter, however, I was not sanguine. Lincoln's cotton agents will say something on that point. In course of the conversation I drew from Ford that he feared Kirby Smith would be in the way of a settlement, because there was a growing suspicion that he (Smith) was carrying on negotiations with Maximilian. The suspicion was founded upon newspaper articles of late appearance favoring imperial annexation, which it was well understood had been written by certain gentlemen on Smith's staff. In answer to a question, Ford assured me that if such a sale was attempted he would instantly bring about a counter revolution. General Slaughter was of opinion that the best way for officers in his situation to get honorably back into the Union was to cross the river, conquer two or three states from the French, and ultimately annex them, with all their inhabitants, to the United States. In short, I think they anticipate such a step as an immediate consequence of peace. Of all these things, however, I will keep you posted.

Very truly yours,

"LEW WALLACE, Major-General of Volunteers."

## III

Despatch to General Grant concerning Brazos—Letter to Ford and Slaughter—Propositions submitted to Kirby Smith—Letter from and reply to General Walker—Movements of Smith—Proclamation—Overtures to Maximilian—Return to Baltimore—Letter from Carvajal.

THE despatch which follows was sent first to Major-General Canby, in command of the Division of the West Mississippi, with headquarters at New Orleans. In his absence, Assistant Adjutant-General C. H. Dyer forwarded it at once to General John Dix, in New York City, to be transmitted by him to General Grant. General Dix considered the despatch of such importance that, instead of trusting it to the mails, he sent it to General Grant by one of his aides, Captain Thomas Lord, thus, as he wrote to Grant, anticipating "the ordinary mail and passenger communication through Baltimore by more than twenty-four hours."<sup>1</sup>

"BRAZOS SANTIAGO, TEXAS, *March* 14, 1865.

"*General U. S. Grant:*

"GENERAL,—Upon my arrival at New Orleans I was fortunate enough to meet Mr. Charles Worthington, collector of port of Brazos. Mr. Worthington, besides being a citizen of Texas, well known, particularly in the western part, is shrewd, discreet, and trustworthy, and intimately acquainted with such controlling rebels at Brownsville as Brigadier-General J. E. Slaughter, commanding the West District of Texas, headquarters at Brownsville, and Colonel

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xlviii., p. 1276.



## LEW WALLACE

J. S. Ford, commanding a regiment in Slaughter's district. For the purpose of sounding General Slaughter, I sent Mr. Worthington from this post to Matamoras. He managed his charge with shrewdness and success. His report is subjoined (marked A). Obtaining an interview with General Slaughter, he found that gentleman disposed to talk freely about the situation and about a settlement of difficulties. He then proposed that the general should meet me under a flag of truce. The proposal was accepted and Point Isabel named as the place of conference, and 12.30 p.m., Wednesday, the 9th instant, as the time. To cover the real object of the meeting, at General Slaughter's instance, the rendition of criminals was specified as the subject of conference. In this connection I call your attention to General Slaughter's note in reply to Mr. Worthington's. On the 9th instant a 'norther' sprung up, making it impossible on the part of both of us to fulfil the engagement. On the following morning I sent a letter under flag of truce to General Slaughter, a copy of which is enclosed (marked B), in which I approved Mr. Worthington's proposal, stated why I could not cross to Point Isabel, and asked a renewal of the arrangement. The officer to whom my letter was delivered for transmission at the same time forwarded one to me from General Slaughter, a glance at which will satisfy you, I think, that that gentleman is as anxious in the business as I am myself. In fact, general, I am minute in my narrative expressly to show you why I feel assured that the rebel authorities in this part of the world are really very desirous of a speedy peace, at least so far as concerns themselves. On the 11th instant the signals agreed on announced General Slaughter's arrival at Point Isabel. I at once went over to meet him, carrying along supplies and tents. The general's party consisted of his staff and Colonel Ford, and mine of Lieutenant-Colonel Woolley, Lieutenant-Colonel Catlin, Major Ross, of my staff, and Mr. Worthington. The conference lasted until the next day in the afternoon. On both sides there was an effort to make it agreeable.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“If you at any time hear in the way of complaint that I have been hobnobbing and sleeping with rebels in this region, please understand the matter and take care of me. Very early in the interview I made up my mind that both General Slaughter and Colonel Ford were not only willing, but anxious to find some ground upon which they could honorably get from under what they admitted to be a falling Confederacy. In justice to them, I will add that both went into the Rebellion reluctantly. I will say further, that General Slaughter placed his disposition to bring about an accommodation upon grounds of humanity, and an unwillingness to see his state invaded and ruined, and the war decline into guerilla murders. He and Ford insisted that they could procrastinate the final result indefinitely, but at the same time frankly admitted that if that were done the North would ultimately conquer the South as a desert. When I urged that in the present situation of the war west of the Mississippi they could not reasonably hope for assistance from Richmond and their eastern armies; that they were practically isolated; that as a consequence their highest present obligations were to their trans-Mississippi army and citizens, whose honor and welfare they were charged with and alone bound to regard, they agreed with me without hesitation, and asked me to give them such propositions as would cover those objects, and at the same time be likely to prove acceptable to our government. It was delicate business, and I did my best. How I succeeded you will find by reference to a copy of the propositions themselves, which I have the honor of transmitting herewith. Permit me to say that they were hurriedly drawn, yet drawn with an eye special to President Lincoln’s proclamation, as to what I interpret as a prevalent sentiment of the Northern people. I was careful not to assume authorization or to commit the government in any manner. The propositions are only offered as a basis of settlement, as an invitation to further any formal negotiations. They are addressed to the Confederate military authorities as the only ones now existing

in the trans-Mississippi region who, on their side, have any power, and upon whom all responsibility is at present resting.

“To satisfy military pride, the propositions assume the settlement to be voluntary on the part of the rebels. To save military honor, they are drawn with an intent to cover all classes of persons whose welfare and security are supposed to be in the keeping of the said authorities. To soldiers and citizens they offer the alternatives: If you wish to remain in the United States to become citizens, you must take the oath of allegiance; if you do not desire to become citizens again, you are at liberty to go abroad with your property. To get their consent to consider their confiscation of the property of Union men void, it is proposed that the United States shall not undertake further to execute the confiscation laws of the Federal congress. So far as we are concerned, you will observe this would operate prospectively, not retrospectively; in other words, confiscations by our courts had to this time would remain in force. Fortunately, it is well known that in the trans-Mississippi states, while there have been many seizures and occupations of the property of rebels, there have been but few, if any, final confiscations by judicial decrees. In reference to slave property, both General Slaughter and Colonel Ford admitted that as a value it had ceased to be of great importance. The only condition they talked about respecting it was, that as its abolition was inevitable, the interests of the negro, as well as the necessities of the people of these states, required the adoption of a system of gradual emancipation. I had no difficulty, consequently, in getting them to accept for the present a general reference of the subject to our Congress. This reference, you will please observe, involves not a question about abolition, but simply such questions as whether the abolition shall be gradual or immediate, and whether it shall be with or without compensation. It may be well for me to say here that no doubt the rebel authorities will interpret the permission proposed to be given those of their people who



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

may choose to go abroad to make preparations for departure, to include the right to sell their slaves, or take them away out of the country. I submit it to our authorities whether such an interpretation may not be granted. Practically, the grand result will not be affected. They cannot carry a slave to a foreign country where his freedom will not be assured; neither will a sale now retard the inevitable liberation. Emancipation will be as certain to find [a slave in] the hands of one man as in those of another. Is the concession of any actual materiality? It only remains for me to inform you that General Slaughter and Colonel Ford received the propositions and undertook to forward them immediately to General Walker, commanding the State of Texas, and to General Kirby Smith. Colonel Ford is to take them in person, and, as he is politically the most influential Confederate soldier in Texas, that fact gives me additional confidence. He will go first to Galveston, where, according to the understanding, I am in a few days to follow him. Secrecy is for the present as much required on their part as on my own. Looking forward to an interview with General Kirby Smith, I intend asking General Canby to send me General Davis, of Texas, commanding a brigade in our army. Smith and Davis have been lifelong friends.

“At present, general, I see nothing else important to send you, except that our consul, Mr. Etchison, whom Meija is said to have outraged, is a humbug, a drunkard, and a fool. His official conduct was unworthy our government. He has mutilated the books of his consulate. He charged our own citizens unwarrantable fees, and I am assured on excellent authority that it can be established that he has in his pockets several thousand dollars in gold not his own. Even his washerwoman was left unpaid. Certainly there is nothing in the affair justifying attention. Mr. Wood, our commercial agent, has, since Etchison's departure, reached Matamoras and been kindly received by Maximilian's officials. As to the rebel trade by way of Matamoras and Brownsville, I think it is only sufficient to



## LEW WALLACE

say that I can stand on my boat and count at least one hundred vessels of all kinds lying off Bagdad. Neither the port of New Orleans nor that of Baltimore can present to-day such a promise of commercial activity.

"Very truly, general, your friend and obedient servant,

"LEW WALLACE,

"Major-General of Volunteers, U. S. Army."

The propositions which accompanied the despatch were as follows:

"POINT ISABEL, TEXAS, *March 12, 1865.*

"*Brigadier-General J. E. Slaughter and Colonel J. S. Ford,*  
*C. S. Army:*

"GENTLEMEN,—At your instance I beg leave to submit the following as a basis upon which it is possible, in my judgment, to secure a speedy peace. For the sake of a perfect understanding, permit me to say:

"I. The proper authorities of my government have not authorized me to present terms or make overtures of any kind to anybody.

"II. The propositions are drawn with particular reference to the trans-Mississippi region, and to what I think is a certainty of their proving acceptable to my government. It should be understood, therefore, that they are by no means in the nature of finalities. It would be presumption in me to undertake to announce in any manner what may be the results of negotiations sincerely conducted by parties properly empowered.

"III. I will venture to suggest that, considering the present situation, your highest present obligations are to your army, your civil authorities, and your citizens. A voluntary settlement on your part cannot, in my judgment, be hoped, unless the honor, happiness, and security of the three classes specified are guaranteed. To this end my propositions are drawn.

### "PROPOSITIONS

"1. That the Confederate military authorities of the trans-Mississippi states and territories agree voluntarily to

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

cease opposition, armed and otherwise, to the re-establishment of the authority of the United States Government over all the region above designated.

"2. The proper authorities of the United States on their part guarantee as follows:

"I. That the officers and soldiers at present actually composing the Confederate army proper, including its *bona fide* attachés and employés, shall have, each and all of them, a full release from and against actions, prosecutions, liabilities, and legal proceedings of every kind, so far as the government of the United States is concerned: *Provided*, That if any of such persons choose to remain within the limits of the United States, they shall first take an oath of allegiance to the same. If, however, they or any of them prefer to go abroad for residence in a foreign country, all such shall be at liberty to do so without obligating themselves by an oath of allegiance, taking with them their families and property, with all privileges of preparation for such departure.

"II. That such of said officers and soldiers as thus determine to remain in the United States shall, after taking the oath of allegiance to the United States Government, be regarded as citizens of that government, invested as such with all the rights, privileges, and immunities now enjoyed by the most favored citizens thereof.

"III. That the above guarantee shall be extended to all persons now serving as civil officers of the national and state Confederate governments within the region—viz., residence abroad or taking the oath of allegiance.

"IV. That persons now private citizens of the region named shall also be included in, and receive the same guarantees upon their complying with the same condition.

"V. As respects rights of property, it is further guaranteed that there shall be no interference with existing titles, liens, etc., of whatever nature, except those derived from seizures, occupancies, and procedures of confiscation, under and by virtue of Confederate laws, orders, proclama-

## LEW WALLACE

tions, and decrees, all of which shall be admitted void from the beginning.

"VI. It is further expressly stipulated that the right of property in slaves shall be referred to the discretion of the Congress of the United States.

"Allow me to say, in conclusion, that if the above propositions are received in the spirit they are sent, we can, in my opinion, speedily have a reunited and prosperous people.

"Very truly, gentlemen, your friend and obedient servant,

LEW WALLACE,

"Major-General of Volunteers, U. S. Army."

In the mean time special orders had been issued by command of Major-General Canby, notifying Brigadier-General E. J. Davis that his services were required by General Wallace at Brazos Santiago, and that he should proceed at once to that place. General Wallace was not content with merely submitting propositions, as is shown in this letter addressed to Brigadier-General Slaughter:

"BRAZOS SANTIAGO, TEXAS, *March 17, 1865.*

"*Brigadier-General J. E. Slaughter, Commanding at Brownsville:*

"GENERAL,—I cannot help thinking that a good step has been taken towards a satisfactory peace. Upon reflection, however, it is my judgment that something more can be done in the same direction. It is hardly enough to send propositions; let us do more; let us follow them up. With this in mind I have now the honor to suggest that you consult Colonel Ford and prevail upon him, if possible, to go with me to Galveston. For this purpose I will gladly give him passage to that port on my steamer. To succeed at all, I beg you both to reflect that somebody must "break the ice" on your side, as I have on mine; somebody must summon the moral courage to give his voice and the weight of his position and influence in favor of negotiations

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

as a preliminary to settlement. That is all I ask the colonel openly to commit himself to, and surely that cannot have the effect to injure him in public estimation. The speculators who are making money out of precious Texan blood may decry him, but the people will not; neither will the soldiery who carry that blood living in their hearts. I offer him an opportunity to become the benefactor of these suffering classes. Say to him, if you please, that I have sent to New Orleans for General Davis, also a noble Texan; that I have set my heart on seeing them go hand in hand to General Kirby Smith, each representing his side in this unnatural struggle, both representing their state; that I feel sure they will succeed, in which case the honor of the settlement, as well as the settlement itself, will be theirs. Finally, it will be obvious to both of you that if he goes with me, an interview will certainly be granted by Walker and Smith. If the colonel consents to my suggestion, it will be better to let me know it immediately; then I can send him notice of the time of my departure from Galveston, so that he can join me the evening before.

“Remembering the spirit manifested in our conference at Point Isabel, I subscribe myself,

“Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

“LEW WALLACE,

“Major-General of Volunteers.”

Colonel Ford replied briefly to this proposition, stating that, in the temporary absence of General Slaughter, his request could not be granted without an order from the brigadier-general commanding, but that it would be forwarded to him by express immediately, and he declared himself personally willing to make any sacrifice short of honor to restore peace.<sup>1</sup>

In reply to this note, General Wallace informed Colo-

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xlviii., part ii., p. 459.



onel Ford that General Davis had arrived at Brazos Santiago, and that he hoped the express had reached General Slaughter, and that the desired permission had been given for the Confederate officer to accompany them to Galveston.

Major-General J. G. Walker, commanding the Department of Texas, however, looked upon the scheme as one which could not be considered or discussed. His refusal not only expressed disapproval of General Slaughter's course, but also conveyed to that officer something very like an official reprimand.<sup>1</sup>

General Wallace, nevertheless, proceeded to Galveston on the steamer *Clifton*, and immediately communicated with Major-General Walker himself, urging still more strongly a conference which he suggested should be placed in the hands of General E. Kirby Smith, representing the Confederates, leaving all the arrangements entirely in his hands. On his side, General Wallace offered to bring with him General Davis and some staff-officers.

The proposition was refused by General Walker in no very courteous terms. In conclusion he wrote, April 6th :

"It would be folly in me to pretend that we are not tired of a war that has sown sorrow and desolation over our land; but we will accept no other than an honorable peace. With three hundred thousand men yet in the field, we would be the most abject of mankind if we should now basely yield all that we have been contending for during the last four years—namely, nationality and the rights of self-government. With the blessing of God, we will yet achieve these, and extort from your government all that we ask. Whenever you are willing to yield these, and to treat as equal with equal, an officer of your high rank

*Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xlviii., part i., p. 1148.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and character, clothed with the proper authority from your government, will not be reduced to the necessity of seeking an obscure corner of the Confederacy to inaugurate negotiations."

The enterprise upon which General Wallace had based such ardent hopes thus failing, he returned to New Orleans. The day after his arrival, April 6th, just three days before the surrender of General Lee and the fall of Richmond, he wrote to Colonel Ford and General Slaughter:

"You will have a natural anxiety to know the finale of the conference held so agreeably at Point Isabel. The fairest way to gratify you is to send copies of the communications interchanged between General Walker and myself, which you will accordingly find enclosed. I regret this conclusion. Could we have succeeded, the consequence would have been more honorable to us all than battles fought. The people of Texas, at least, would have been grateful to us. Speaking very frankly, General Walker's letter is both childish and discourteous. A reading will convince you of its weakness. There is scarcely a sentence in it that does not lay him open to cruel retort. For instance, he speaks of ties that bind him to the Confederacy. Admit them to be ever so sacred, are they any more so than those which bound him to the old Confederation? He says to accede to our method of settlement would make your people infamous forever. I do not think so. But grant it, and look backward a moment. Did not your states go out of the old Union separately? What more do I propose now? By what logic can this going out be any more infamous than the former? If he asserts that separate action on the part of a state is unlawful, what becomes of the doctrine of state rights? Was not that doctrine the argument which quieted your consciences in the old secession? He alludes to identity of social and political interests. Slavery as between the sections was

the only separating social and political interest; you know that. Where is slavery now? We armed it over a year ago, and now you are doing the same thing. *Apropos*, once a soldier, never more a slave. He speaks of suffering endurance. What else did he expect? But the sufferings have been mutual. As arguments they are double-edged—as good for me as for him. I propose to end them. He proposes to continue them. Whose sense is best vindicated? Finally, my propositions were honorable, because they contemplate nothing degrading, unless life in the old Union, equal in everything, is degrading; if so, the ‘common ancestry,’ to which General Walker is pleased to allude, must have been more than ordinarily debased. They not only submitted to the old political connection, but were co-workers in their original fabrication, and proud of them always. But enough. If Texas should be invaded, you and I will not be responsible. Not ours the blood, the ruin, the horrors that will ensue. We have lived to realize an old truism. What calamities one foolish man can entail! So far as the discourtesies of General W.’s letter are concerned, I have nothing to say. As honorable men it is yours to feel them, mine to divide them with you.”<sup>1</sup>

April 6th, General Wallace also wrote to General A. S. Hurlbut, then commanding the Department of the Gulf, and enclosed a copy of his reply to General Walker after the rejection of his proposition, in which he had said:

“It is probably unfortunate that I had no opportunity of reading your letter dated March 25th, and received yesterday, before forwarding mine of the 30th. When I submitted the propositions of which you speak so ill-naturedly, it was my understanding that they were to go to General E. Kirby Smith, commanding the department

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xlviii., p. 463.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

on your side. Permit me to hope you will yet forward them as originally intended by General Slaughter, Colonel Ford, and myself. It is impossible for me to believe that accident or policy has located all the sane men of your Confederacy in its obscure corners. If it were in my power I would not recall the stipulations proposed. Enough has been developed since I have been on your coast to satisfy me that the time is not far ahead when they will be accepted. Whatever General Smith's answer to my letter of the 30th may be, it can be forwarded to New Orleans. Hence there is no necessity for my waiting it here. I sincerely hope it will show a higher regard for the interest of the people of both sections, and a keener appreciation of the military situation than yours manifests."

A copy of this letter was sent to General Grant, with General Wallace's official report. In his letter to General Hurlbut he spoke of an interview which they had the previous day, in which an arrangement had been made to reach General Smith notwithstanding the efforts of Walker to prevent it. He said further:

"If General Smith accedes to the suggestion of an interview, please take the business in your own control. If he is willing to confer he must be willing to treat. I will make it a point when I get to Washington to ascertain what our authorities think of the proposition and post you General Smith's reply."

After his brief conference with General Hurlbut, General Wallace returned to Baltimore and resumed command of the Middle Department. He wrote to General Grant, who was then in Washington, and with whom it appears he had a personal interview after reaching Baltimore. In this letter, sent from his headquarters, and dated April 19th, he says:



## LEW WALLACE

"Circumstances have doubtless made it impossible for you to send me the notice to accompany you, as you were kind enough to suggest the morning of your passing through this city.

"The formal report of the result of my negotiations in Texas, with correspondence, is being copied. I think it better briefly to sum it up for your immediate information.

"I went to Galveston, according to the arrangement agreed upon with Slaughter and Ford. A General Walker, commanding the Department of Texas, there declined an interview upon the basis proposed, upon which I proceeded to New Orleans, and arranged with General Hurlbut to open communications with Kirby Smith upon the subject. General H. and myself concluded that the affair had gone far enough at least to make Smith show his hand.

"I also arranged in New Orleans for Mr. Worthington to return to Matamoras and sound Slaughter and Ford, to ascertain if they were willing to act independently of Smith—a result not at all improbable. So the matter stands.

"That an arrangement with Kirby Smith is practicable *now*, I don't doubt at all. (Ten thousand men landed on Galveston Island will insure it absolutely. I feel sure he will surrender without a shot fired.)

"I will forward the regular report, if you desire it, or bring it on with me, when I hear from you."

General Grant evidently signified his desire for the full report, which was sent to him at Washington, where he was at that time. Nearly a month elapsed, however, before the report was transmitted. It was accompanied by enclosures, which have either been quoted or to which sufficient reference has been made, and was as follows:

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLE DEPARTMENT,  
“BALTIMORE, *April* 18, 1865.

“*Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant, Washington City, D. C.:*

“GENERAL,—In continuation of my report dated Brazos Santiago, March 14th, I have the honor to submit the following: It occurred to me that it would be a point gained if I could prevail on Colonel Ford to accompany me to Galveston. Accordingly, I sent General Slaughter the letter dated Brazos Santiago, March 17, 1865, and received a reply from Colonel Ford himself, dated March 19th; copies are enclosed. The absence of General Slaughter devolving the command at Brownsville upon the colonel made it impossible for the latter to comply with my request. That he wished to go I have no doubt; his letter fairly commits him. When General Davis joined me, in the hope that Slaughter had returned to Brownsville, or had at least been heard from, I again addressed Colonel Ford. This last communication was of March 24th. (See the accompanying, together with that of his reply, dated the 26th.) Unfortunately, General S. had neither returned nor been heard from. I arrived off Galveston on the evening of March 29th, and on the 30th communicated with Brigadier-General J. M. Hawes, commanding defences of the city, through whom I sent a letter to Major-General J. G. Walker, then in command of the District of Texas. Copies are enclosed. At the same time mine of the 30th to Walker was delivered for transmission, his of the 25th received by me, and of that also I furnish a copy. As you will see, General Walker belongs to the Radicals, from whom nothing is to be hoped. Though little known, he has the reputation of being a good soldier. Unlike Slaughter and Ford, he is not a citizen of Texas, and hence has not the same interest in her welfare. He admits he is tired of the war, yet relies on three hundred thousand veterans whom he yet claims. A Galveston paper of the 30th announced that General Magruder was daily expected at Houston to relieve him of his command, a fact rather demonstrative of what I had elsewhere heard—viz., that he (Walker) was not in full ac-

## LEW WALLACE

cord with General E. Kirby Smith. After reading his letter, I took a view of Galveston, and when I saw behind the town the masts of several blockade-runners, loading and unloading, I thought the reason of the stand he has assumed was quite plain—there was too much money being made.

“It was apparent that it was useless to wait longer, and as the doing so might compromise the dignity of our government, I sailed to New Orleans, intending to put the business when I arrived there in the hands of Major-General Hurlbut. Before leaving, however, I sent General Walker a short note, of which a copy is enclosed, dated April 2d. How much he made off me I leave you to judge. At New Orleans I called upon General Hurlbut, explained the affair to him, stated my belief that Walker would not carry out the intention of Slaughter, Ford, and myself by forwarding the propositions to General Smith, and suggested that direct communication be opened with that officer. General H. acceded to the suggestion, and agreed with me that ‘the matter had at least gone far enough to induce Smith to ‘define his position.’ I also suggested that Mr. Worthington should be again sent to Matamoras for the purpose of carrying to Slaughter and Ford the result of my visit to Galveston, and to sound them with a view to ascertaining if they were disposed to act independently of Walker and Smith. Mr. Worthington was of opinion that they could be prevailed upon to take that course if they were assured of sufficient support. Remembering the anxiety those gentlemen had shown in the conference at Point Isabel, I was of the same opinion. General Hurlbut thought such a result was worth the effort, and accepted the suggestion. If Worthington was able to carry out with him the news of the fall of Richmond, the surrender of Lee, and the flight of Jeff Davis, I am confident he will succeed. So the business stands unconcluded, and I am not yet out of hope. Of one thing I am sure—Texas rebels are without heart or confidence, and divided among themselves. The soldiers and subordinates are

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

anxious to make peace, and it is almost certain that Kirby Smith will come to terms now, provided he is not too far committed to Maximilian. Another point I am sure of. If Davis and Smith attempt coalition with or annexation to the new empire of Mexico, they will be resisted by the rebel soldiers themselves. In view of such a contingency it would be well enough, I think, to give the commanding officers at Brazos appropriate directions. By Mr. Worthington I sent Slaughter and Ford the letter which concludes the correspondence dated New Orleans, April 6, 1865, of which I sent you a copy.

“Very respectfully your friend and obedient servant,  
“LEW WALLACE, Major-General Commanding.”

When the report was at length forwarded, it was accompanied by the following letter, which pointed out the attitude of General Smith and his suspected effort to intrigue with the Mexican Imperialists, a suspicion that events which were occurring, even at that time, fully justified:

“NATIONAL HOTEL, WASHINGTON CITY, *May 16, 1865.*

“*Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant, Washington City:*

“GENERAL,—Enclosed find the conclusion of my report concerning the Point Isabel interview. Since writing it, General E. Kirby Smith, according to report, has refused to surrender, and has urged his soldiers to hold out, as they have means to maintain themselves until assisted from abroad. Please revert to the confidential letter I sent you from Brazos, giving the substance of what Colonel Ford told me about General Smith’s suspected negotiations with Maximilian. That, in my opinion, is the key to Smith’s strange conduct. Reasoning from Ford’s statement, I cannot do otherwise than believe that there is a secret arrangement existing between the Mexican Imperialists and the Texan Confederates, contemplating ultimate annexation of Texas and mutual support, or the support without the annexation. Probably you have sufficient data



## LEW WALLACE

upon which to form a determinate opinion on the subject. You will pardon me, I am sure, for calling your attention to the points made.

“Very respectfully your friend and obedient servant,  
“LEW WALLACE, Major-General.”

Meanwhile, General Walker evidently thought better of his refusal to lay before General Smith the propositions drawn up by General Wallace. A letter written from General Smith's headquarters at Shreveport, Louisiana, dated May 7th, was forwarded and reached General Wallace after his return to Baltimore. The writer said:

“A report has been forwarded to me by Major-General Walker, of an interview held between yourself and Brigadier-General Slaughter, in the presence of Colonel Ford (upon your invitation), and of the tenor of the conversation which then occurred.

“Also a copy of a preamble and propositions submitted by you to him, with the expression of a belief upon your part that they furnished the basis of an honorable and satisfactory peace.

“On yesterday (May 6th) I received your two letters to Major-General Walker, dated respectively March 30th and April 2d, and written off Galveston, in which you may say it was your understanding that your propositions were to be referred to me for my consideration.

“This being the case, I regret that they were not addressed to me originally.

“Expressing as you do an earnest desire for an honorable and satisfactory peace, and understanding as I do that your propositions had the sanction of General Grant and your government, I deem it a courtesy due that I should convey to you my hearty concurrence in your desire for such a peace.

“I need hardly say to you that I am entirely without authority to entertain propositions such as you have presented.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“Nevertheless, I feel at liberty to say that all sincere efforts to bring about a cessation of this fratricidal war, saving the honor and interest of the army and people of the Confederate States, will meet with my hearty co-operation.

“In conclusion let me say that your desire for frankness and sincerity in any intercourse we may have, meets with my cordial response.”

The courteous reply of General Smith was in marked contrast to what General Wallace, in a private note, had termed “the fire-eating” bombast of General Walker. Underneath his suavity, however, was an opposition quite as determined as that shown by General Walker to the proposed terms of peace.

The correspondence between General Slaughter, Colonel Ford, and General Wallace had been at once despatched by General Smith to General Samuel Cooper, adjutant and inspector general of the Confederacy in Richmond, which, by that time (April 11th) had ceased to exist. General Cooper was informed that copies had been forwarded by the blockade from Galveston to John Slidell, commissioner for the Confederacy in Paris. In his accompanying note General Smith suggested to Mr. Slidell that the letters might be of interest to him, evidencing as they did clearly the policy of the United States government to indorse the Monroe Doctrine and re-establish the Juarez government in Mexico.<sup>1</sup>

Communication was thus held between the commander-in-chief of the Trans-Mississippi Department, then taking its last desperate stand in Texas, and Napoleon III. in Paris.

April 21st, General Smith issued a proclamation to his troops setting forth the necessity for continued effort and renewed loyalty, pointing out that the great re-

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xlviii., part ii., p. 1277.

sources of the Trans-Mississippi Department would secure to them "terms that a proud people can accept with honor." <sup>1</sup>

Robert Ross, an agent of the Confederacy, was chosen to present to the Emperor Maximilian "certain views as to the future interests of the Confederate States and the empire of Mexico, although it was explained that, while he had no diplomatic authority, he was empowered to give assurance that the Confederate government "would be willing to enter into a liberal agreement with the empire of Mexico based upon the principles of mutual protection against their common enemy."

While negotiations with Mexico were in progress an effort was made to conciliate the Comanches "and other wild tribes of the plains," who were angered against the North, and for this reason were anxious to conclude a treaty with the South. A commission was chosen to confer with the Indians at a grand council to be held May 15th, at Council Grove, Kansas. General Smith was informed by Brigadier-General Cooper, commanding the district of Indian Territory, that the Indians who would attend were "thirsting for revenge on the frontier, and *if assisted* would attack at once, and even operate farther north simultaneously.

"Now I desire instructions," he continued, "whether it would be proper or politic, under existing conditions, to turn loose these savages upon the settlements on their frontier, and, if so, request to be informed as to when the attack should be made." <sup>2</sup>

The disbanding of General Smith's army, which he was finally powerless to prevent, and his enforced surrender, fortunately prevented the execution of this inhuman plot.

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series 1, vol. xlviii., part ii., p. 1283.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1306.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The details of General Wallace's negotiations with the Confederates during this time have already been given. The equally important transactions held with the Mexican Liberals, with a view to prevent the alliance between General Smith and the Imperialists, were narrated in the following letter, which General Wallace wrote to President Diaz, August 15, 1889:

"Your excellency's memory will serve me when I recall that my government was the only one in all the world which at that time continued to recognize the republic of Mexico as a government and Benito Juarez as its president; with equal clearness you will also remember that my government was, owing to the exhaustive struggle engaging it, bound for the time to the policy of neutrality in your struggle. Mr. Seward, secretary of state, had contented himself with protests to Napoleon, and was opposed to any positive step which might serve the emperor as an excuse for recognizing the Confederacy of which Mr. Davis was chief. For that reason the objects of my mission to the Rio Grande were without Mr. Seward's knowledge; in fact, of the persons constituting the administration, they were known only to President Lincoln and Mr. Stanton. In an interview with President Lincoln upon the subject, he admonished me not to mention the business to Mr. Seward. Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Stanton accepted General Grant's view of the failing condition of the Confederacy, and agreed with him that the time was come, in our own interests, as well as those of Mexico, to help President Juarez, at least privately.

"This explanation seems to me needful to a proper understanding of what followed, and particularly of the instructions I received verbally from General Grant, constituting the real object of my mission. Those instructions were that, upon arriving at Brazos Santiago, I was to put myself in communication with the nearest reliable representative of the Liberal government of Mexico, and ascer-



tain what its authorities were willing to do if Confederate troops crossed the Rio Grande in armed bodies to unite themselves with Maximilian. If I found they were willing to arrest them, then I was to ascertain what they required in the way of material assistance to carry out such a policy. If they only required arms and war material, I was to help provide them. In the latter project General Grant thought it right that an effort should be made upon the basis of the credit of the Mexican government. He did not tell me what would be done in the event of failure in that scheme; it was not necessary he should tell me. Though the further intentions of the administration were held in reserve, I have no doubt, if the demonstration proved the necessity, it would have openly allied itself with President Juarez. Such was my opinion then, and subsequent events confirmed it.

"With the public order in my portfolio, I hurried to Brazos Santiago. Arrived there, I found the whole left bank of the Rio Grande in possession of the Confederates, while the right bank from Matamoras down was held and patrolled by forces of Maximilian. I also ascertained that General José M. J. Carvajal, of the Liberal party, was governor of the State of Tamaulipas, and General Escobedo governor of the State of Nuevo Leon. General Carvajal was up somewhere in the mountains of Victoria, while General Escobedo was in Monterey. Carvajal being nearest, I resolved to correspond with him.

"In this statement, your excellency, I am particular, for the reason that at various times it has come to me in the way of accusation that in the Mexican business I was a filibuster and a speculator. You will think better of me, I hope, understanding that I was in the military service of my country, acting throughout under order of my superior officer. The explanation will also serve to relieve all who came to be connected with me in the affair, General Carvajal and General Sturm, among others, from unjust suspicions.

"I was fortunate enough, directly upon landing at Brazos

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Santiago, to find a trustworthy man who knew where General Carvajal was, and would carry a note from me to him. The note stated simply that General Carvajal might find it to his interest to visit me at Brazos, where I would remain for a few days. The messenger found him in the mountains with about three hundred men, whom he was exercising with bows and arrows, in place of fire-arms—to such straits was he reduced. President Juarez, then in Chihuahua, the last state capital left him by the French and Imperialists, was fortunate in the possession of the services of a number of able and loyal assistants, among them Señors Romero, Mariscal, and Carvajal, civilians, and Generals Porfirio Diaz and Escobedo of the army. General Carvajal interpreted my note hopefully, and came to me, passing the French lines in the disguise of a Texas horse-buyer, a character to which the fluency of his English helped him perfectly. In course of the interview which ensued, I inquired if he was in any manner authorized to speak or act for President Juarez. He replied by producing a document which, as I read it, really constituted him a commissioner with high powers. By it he was authorized to go abroad to place a loan in behalf of his general government, solicit immigration to Mexico, and buy arms and war material generally. I may be excused for recalling the pleasure I subsequently had when Minister Romero certified the meaning of the authorization.

“Your excellency will perceive instantly how I received the development. It seemed precisely in the line of my mission, and was strengthened by the general’s strong insistence that if the Liberals were in power they would gladly stop every armed Confederate who crossed from Texas. At once I proposed that he should accompany me to the United States. He said he could not abandon his men. I replied that his chief duty was to his whole country. He said he had no clothes. I offered to furnish them. Such a commission would be expensive, and he was without money. I offered to set him down at the door of his legation in Washington, after which, in concert with Min-

## LEW WALLACE

ister Romero, he could issue bonds, and raise funds and purchase whatever might be needed to advance his country's cause. Finally, upon a promise that I would assist him in placing the loan and making the purchases, he yielded to my importunities, and as there was a steamer in the bay specially at my orders, I gave him a state-room and passage across the Gulf. When I set him down in Washington, outside of the legation, no one except General Grant, Secretary Stanton, and President Lincoln knew of his arrival or how he came; and they only knew it through my official reports."

In recognition of the great service he had rendered his government, Carvajal wrote to General Wallace the following letter, being at the time in Baltimore:

"EUTAW HOUSE, *May 6, 1865.*

"GENERAL,—I have had the honor of receiving your letter dated the 5th instant, in which you kindly suggest some very important thoughts for the consideration of Mr. Romero, our Mexican minister at Washington.

"Thanking you kindly for the noble efforts you are making on behalf of my afflicted country, and for your generous friendship towards myself, I am, dear sir, yours truly,

"JOSÉ M. J. CARVAJAL.

"I will to-day present your thoughts to Mr. Romero for his consideration."

The negotiations with the Mexican Liberals were interrupted by the death of President Lincoln and the trial of the assassins, so far as General Wallace's participation in them was concerned, and were not resumed until the autumn of 1865.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### IV

The Lincoln commission—Members—Charge—Summing up by John A. Bingham, special judge-advocate—Execution July 7th—Charges of Father Walter—Sketches of the assassins for picture—Mrs. Surratt.

UPON his return from Texas, while on the train, General Wallace was shocked to hear of the death of President Lincoln. He proceeded immediately to Baltimore, and was temporarily relieved of the command of the Middle Department to serve on the commission, in Washington, appointed by President Johnson for the trial of the assassins.

The first question raised was whether the prisoners should be given a civil or military trial. The attorney-general at length decided that the assassins of a president were public enemies, and as such should be tried before a military tribunal.

Nine competent officers were accordingly detailed as members of the court-martial: Major-General David Hunter, U. S. V.; Major-General Lew Wallace, U. S. V.; Brevet Major-General August V. Kautz, U. S. V.; Brigadier-General T. M. Harris, U. S. V.; Brevet Colonel C. H. Tompkins, U. S. V.; Lieutenant-Colonel David R. Clendenin, Eighth Illinois Cavalry. Brigadier-General Joseph Holt, judge-advocate and recorder, was assisted by Judge-Advocate Henry L. Burnet and Hon. John A. Bingham. Brevet General John A. Hartranft was made special provost-marshal. The court convened in Washington, May 10th, and organized with closed doors.



Major-General David Hunter was made president, General Wallace ranking second.

The orders convening the court were read in the presence of the prisoners: David E. Herold, Mary E. Surratt, George A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, and their accessories: Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, Edward Spangler, Samuel Arnold, and Michael O'Laughlin. John Surratt, who was also implicated in the conspiracy, succeeded in making his escape, being captured in Egypt. He was returned to the United States for trial in 1866 and acquitted. The prisoners were asked if they had objection to any member of the commission, and all replied in the negative. The principal witness for the government was Louis A. Weichmann, who died recently in Anderson, Indiana. He was studying for the Roman Catholic priesthood, had been a classmate of John Surratt, and a member of Mrs. Surratt's household.

Of this witness General Wallace said: "I have never seen anything like his steadfastness. There he stood, a young man only twenty-three years of age, strikingly handsome, intelligent, self-possessed, under the most searching cross-examination I have ever heard. He had been innocently involved in the schemes of the conspirators, and although the Surratts were his personal friends, he was forced to appear and testify when subpoenaed. He realized deeply the sanctity of the oath he had taken to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and his testimony could not be confused or shaken in the slightest detail."

The prisoners were specifically charged with aiding armed rebellion within the United States, co-operating with John Wilkes Booth, John Surratt, Jefferson Davis, and others to murder Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States; Andrew Johnson, Vice-President;

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

William H. Seward, Secretary of State; and Ulysses S. Grant, Lieutenant-General of the United States Army.

The trial continued nearly two months; scores of witnesses were examined, a determined effort being made to save the chief conspirators, especially Mrs. Surratt. In his lengthy and comprehensive argument, in which the case was carefully reviewed, John A. Bingham, special judge-advocate, said, in conclusion :

“I leave the decision of this dread issue with the court to which it alone belongs. It is for you to say, upon your oaths, whether the accused are guilty.

“I am not conscious that in this argument I have made any erroneous statement of the evidence, or drawn any erroneous conclusions; yet I pray the court, out of tender regard and jealous care for the rights of the accused, to see that no error of mine, if any there be, shall work them harm. The past services of this honorable court give assurance that, without fear, favor, or affection, they will discharge with fidelity the duty enjoined upon them by their oaths. Whatever else may befall, I trust in God that in this, as in every other American court, the rights of the whole people will be respected, and that the republic in this, its supreme hour of trial, will be true to itself and just to all—ready to protect the rights of the humblest, to redress every wrong, to avenge every crime, to vindicate the majesty of law, and to maintain inviolate the Constitution, whether assailed secretly or openly, by hosts armed with gold or armed with steel.”

The prisoners were found guilty. Spangler, Arnold, O’Laughlin, and Mudd were sentenced for life to the military prison at Dry Tortugas, Florida, but were subsequently pardoned by President Johnson, with the exception of O’Laughlin, who died in prison. Mrs. Sur-

ratt, Herold, Payne, and Atzerodt were condemned to death, the findings of the court being approved by President Johnson, and they were executed July 7th.

Many efforts have been made to create sympathy for Mrs. Surratt, whom the evidence proved to be deeply implicated. She was zealously defended by Father Walter, a secular priest, who visited her frequently in prison, and administered the sacrament before her execution. He was responsible for the statement that within a few years all the members of the commission died violent deaths. Of this misstatement General T. M. Harris, a member of the commission, said:

"The truth is, at this writing, April, 1892, all the members of the commission are alive except General Hunter and Colonel Tompkins. General Hunter lived to over four-score years, and Colonel Tompkins to seventy-three. The present writer is nearly seventy-nine, and is still able to vindicate the truth in the interest of a true history of his period. "Is it not high time," he adds, "that the American people should be fully informed as to this most important episode in their history, in order that they may not be misled by men who were not the friends, but the enemies of our government in its struggle for its preservation and perpetuation." <sup>1</sup>

During the progress of the trial, when the proceedings were tedious and unimportant, General Wallace employed himself sketching in pencil the members of the commission, the distinguished spectators that thronged the court, and even the prisoners themselves. Drawings made of the latter were utilized in a picture which is now in his study in Crawfordsville. Mrs. Sur-

<sup>1</sup> *The Assassination of Lincoln*, by T. M. Harris, late Brigadier-General U. S. V., a member of the commission, p. 210.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ratt does not appear in the group. General Wallace gave as a reason for this that he saw her face but once during the trial. She came into the court always wearing a heavy veil, which she raised but once for identification.



V

The Wirz commission—Cruelty shown by the evidence—Wirz condemned and hanged—Tedium of trial—Letters from Washington—1866—Book on tactics rejected—Romero—Presentation of battle-flags to Governor Morton, July 4, 1866.

AFTER the sentence of the first commission had been carried out, a second was appointed by President Johnson, also to meet in Washington "on August 19, 1865, or as soon thereafter as practicable, for the trial of such prisoners as might be brought before it." Its chief task was to inquire into the acts of the notorious Captain Henry Wirz, of the Confederate army, keeper of Andersonville prison.

In order that he might serve upon this commission, General Wallace was again temporarily relieved of his command at Baltimore.

The sittings were held in the rooms of the court of claims, General Wallace being made president of the commission. His repeated selection for such duty was owing in part, no doubt, to his practical knowledge of the law. The vigilance of General Wallace throughout the trial was abundantly shown in the official reports. It may be guessed from a letter of the correspondent of the *Boston Advertiser* who, describing his personal appearance, said that, of his striking features, the eyes were remarkable, "never seeming to sleep and never to see, and yet whose observation nothing escapes."

The following extracts from his letters to his wife

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

give a clear idea of his strong distaste for the irksome routine, and the heavy responsibility of his office:

“HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLE DEPARTMENT, *July 10, 1865.*

“To-day I expect General Hancock in Baltimore. He comes to my relief—that is, to assume command of this department. The order requires me to report to the adjutant-general in writing or by letter. What is to be done with me I do not know. All surmise on that point, however, will very soon be at rest. If I am not to be retained in the service, I will very soon be so informed; and the sooner the better. I am quite ready for the surrender when Hancock makes his appearance.

“I am having an easy time. The city very quiet, there is far less to do in the office than ever before. And for employment and recreation, I turn to my skirmish-book, and work at it slowly—my habit, you know—and with painstaking exactness. . . .”

“WASHINGTON, *August 20, 1865.*

“I went to the War Office this morning and found myself president of the military commission assembled for the trial of one Captain Henry Wirz, late rebel, and charged with starving Union prisoners at Andersonville, Georgia.

“I learn that the prisoner’s defence will be that he obeyed orders received from his superiors—in other words, it is expected that out of this investigation will come proof of the leaders’ connection with that criminality.

“The investigation will occupy at least two months—the hot, unwholesome, malarial months here by the Potomac.

“*August 21.*

“The commission organized yesterday. From the manifestations it is composed of able and well-disposed gentlemen. My venerable friend, the advocate-general, has more experience than the rest of us—the wisdom which goes with years.

“The prisoner is undoubtedly of opinion that he is in danger of some kind of punishment. You have only to

get and read the pleas his counsel has prepared and entered for him to satisfy yourself on that point.

"Wirz is a singular-looking creature. He has a small head, retreating forehead, high on the *os frontis* because the hair, light in color, is very thin, threatening him with speedy baldness; prominent ears; small, sharp-pointed nose; mustache and beard heavy enough to conceal the mouth and lower face, and of a dirty, tobacco-stain color; eyes large, and of mixed blue and gray, very restless, and of a peculiar transparency, reminding one continually of a cat's when the animal is excited by scent of prey. In manner he is nervous and fully alarmed, avoids your gaze, and withers and shrivels under the knit brows of the crowd. His complexion is ashen and bloodless, almost blue. Altogether he was well chosen for his awful service in the warring Confederacy.

"At the last period Colonel Chipman announced that the commission was dissolved by order of the secretary of war. So we go! I have requested General Geary to write my farewell address. . . .

"(Later).

"Am just now informed again we are to reassemble tomorrow. I hope that I, at least, will be released from this onerous duty."

"September 4, 1865.

"I am very dull, easily disturbed by noises, and irritable over the most pointless cross-examination of a witness that I ever listened to, and I have suffered under many.

"Out of these testimonies has come an idea, or, as the French put it, a *motif*, for a picture to be named 'Over the Dead Line.' I have already made the first draught, and while in New York I laid in a little stock of oils and shall work it up on canvas. It had its beginning in this wise: one of the witnesses before the Wirz commission testified that a poor prisoner, half dead with thirst, in the Andersonville pen, crawled under the bar called the 'dead line' to reach a brook outside where the water was not so poisonous. The sentinel on duty shot him dead, and the tin cup dropped

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

from his hand beyond the boundary. That is my scene. Only the fallen figure in faded-blue uniform, the stream for which the starving man longed, a portion of the stockade, the bar, the cup.

"The details of that place of torture are horrible.

"On second thought I send the testimony which suggested the painting. The witness's name is Henry C. Lull, of the One Hundred and Forty-sixth New York regiment."

This testimony fully corroborated the opinion of General Wallace, that the details of Andersonville, "that place of torture," are horrible. It was well summed up by Judge-Advocate General Holt in these words:

"A review of the proceedings leads to the opinion that no prejudice to the legal rights of the prisoner can be successfully claimed to have resulted from any decision which excluded testimony he desired to introduce. The trial is believed to have been conducted in accordance with the regulations governing military courts, and the record presents no error which can be held to invalidate the proceedings.

"The annals of our race present nowhere, and at no time, a darker field of crime than that of Andersonville, and it is fortunate for the interests alike of public justice and of historic truth that from this field the veil had been so faithfully and so completely lifted. All the horrors of this pandemonium of the Rebellion are laid bare to us in the broad, steady light of the testimony of some one hundred and fifty witnesses who spoke what they had seen and heard and suffered, and whose evidence, given under oath, and subjected to cross-examination, and to every other test which human experience has devised for the ascertainment of truth, must be accepted as affording an immovable foundation for the sentence pronounced.

"The proof under the second charge shows that some of our soldiers, for mere attempts to escape from their op-



pressors, were given to ferocious dogs to be torn in pieces; that others were confined in stocks and chains till life yielded to the torture, and that others were wantonly shot down at Wirz's bidding, or by his own hand. Here, in the presence of these pitiless murders of unarmed and helpless men, so distinctly alleged and proved, justice might well claim the prisoner's life. There remain, however, to be contemplated crimes yet more revolting, for which he and his co-conspirators must be held responsible. The Andersonville prison records (made exhibits in this case) contain a roster of over thirteen thousand (13,000) dead, buried naked, maimed, and putrid, in one vast sepulchre. Of these, a surgeon of the rebel army, who was on duty at this prison, testifies that at least three-fourths died of the treatment inflicted on them while in confinement; and a surgeon of our own army, who was a prisoner there, states that four-fifths died from this cause. Under this proof, which has not been assailed, nearly ten thousand, if not more, of these deaths must be charged directly to the account of Wirz and his associates. This wide-spread sacrifice of life was not made suddenly or under the influence of wild, ungovernable passion, but was accomplished slowly and deliberately, by packing upwards of thirty thousand men, like cattle, in a fetid pen, a mere cesspool, there to die for need of air to breathe, for want of ground on which to lie, from lack of shelter from the sun and rain, and from the slow, agonizing processes of starvation, when air and space and shelter and food were all within the ready gift of their tormentors. This work of death seems to have been a saturnalia of enjoyment for the prisoner, who amid these savage orgies evidenced such exultation, and mingled with them such nameless blasphemy and ribald jests, as at times to exhibit him rather as a demon than a man. It was his continual boast that by these barbarities he was destroying more Union soldiers than rebel generals were butchering on the battle-field. He claimed to be doing the work of the Rebellion, and faithfully, in all his murderous cruelty and baseness, did he represent its spirit. It is

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

by looking upon the cemeteries which have been filled from Libby, Belle Isle, Salisbury, Florence, Andersonville, and other rebel prisons, and recalling the prolonged sufferings of the patriots who are sleeping there, that we can best understand the inner and real life of the Rebellion, and the hellish criminality and brutality of the traitors who maintained it. For such crimes human power is absolutely impotent to enforce any adequate atonement.

“It may be added, in conclusion, that the court before which the prisoner was tried was composed of officers high in rank, and eminent for their faithful services and probity of character, and that several of them were distinguished for their legal attainments. The investigation of the case was conducted with patience and impartiality, and the conclusion reached is one from which the overwhelming volume of testimony left no escape. It is recommended that the sentence be executed.”

The verdict of the court-martial found Wirz guilty of “combining, confederating, and conspiring with Jefferson Davis” and others. President Johnson refused to interfere, and Wirz was executed on the morning of November 10th at the Old Capitol Prison in Washington.

During the progress of the Wirz trial, as a relief from its worries and tedium, General Wallace had employed his leisure moments in revising the book on tactics, which has been mentioned, especially embodying his original ideas as to skirmishing. This was completed at his home in Crawfordsville.

In a letter from Washington, dated March 7, 1866, the year following, he wrote his wife:

“I have just come in from the Capitol, where General Butler was delivering an argument before the Supreme Court, in the case of Milligan, Bowles & Company. The room was crowded, and as this is the first time I have

## LEW WALLACE

seen him, I was much impressed by the appearance of the famous 'Ben.'

"The commission in the matter of the skirmish-book is to meet to-morrow—where, I do not know. That business done, I shall go to New York, then home. I shall meet the commission and explain everything that wears the semblance of innovation, for the board is composed of conservatives.

"Dust, dust everywhere, sweeping the streets in blinding columns. From the Capitol steps it really looks as if the earth had been pulverized and the breath of fiends was scattering it. Draw your finger on this page and you will see that a portion of it has penetrated the closed windows, making blotters unnecessary.

"The fight, political, continues warm, but is gradually dying out. Johnson is getting the worst of it. It looks very much as if he were going back to the old party, body and soul. Still there is hope. The air is thick with rumors, and the state convention of Pennsylvania has about finished the old Tennesseean."

*" March 12th.*

"I write from the House, inside the bar. The noise, the hubbub, the confusion, the laughter, loud talk, clapping of hands, are really bewildering, and not at all edifying.

"Some days ago the commission was appointed to report on my skirmish-book. I supposed then that the officers assigned to the duty would act promptly in the business. To-day, however, I saw General Hunt (one of them), who tells me that the board is not in the city. Such is military promptitude in time of peace, and there is nothing to do but wait in patience. I am too much interested to leave my work without some energetic support. A wretched cold does not contribute to my amiability of temper."

*" WASHINGTON, March 18th.*

"It is now two weeks since the order appointing the commission to examine my book was made out, yet one of the members, General Crook, has not made his appearance,



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

and in consequence not a step in the work has been taken. I should go home at once but that I do not like to throw away the time and money already spent. Then I am solaced by the idea it will take but little more time, after the board is assembled and begins its examination; and by the further reflection, if I succeed in the desired authorization, I can certainly sell the book for several thousand dollars. I linger on and must continue to do so, being now satisfied that my presence is a material contribution towards possible success.

“The members of the board now present are polite and clever gentlemen, as, it must be recorded, West-Pointers always are. In the interview with them on Friday I made two points—that my work had no competition, and that it was merely an elaboration of the undeveloped system laid down in the old tactics. They examined my manuscript, and we had a frank conversation on the great subject—military. I confess to pretty strong hopes of success and will, for the reasons given, await results with such philosophy as I can command.

“If General Crook is not here by to-morrow, I will see Secretary Stanton and try for a substitute in his place.”

As has been stated, the commission, after recognizing certain evident merits, finally rejected the book. Of his relations with Romero at this time, General Wallace wrote:

“I spend my time studying Spanish, and performing duty as a spectator and listener in the Senate gallery. Of the two occupations, Spanish is the more pleasant and instructive. Once in a while I see Romero, the Mexican minister, who is very open and confidential with me. I have great interest in Mexican affairs.”

July 4th, of the same year (1866), General Wallace was called upon to deliver the speech at the formal presentation of the battle-flags of the Indiana regiments



to Governor O. P. Morton, in Indianapolis. It was an eloquent review of the services rendered by the veterans at Shiloh, Vicksburg, Stone River, Missionary Ridge, and elsewhere. In his final eulogy, he said:

“You know sir how prone men are in prosperity to forget the pangs of adversity. Ordinarily, what cares the young spendthrift, happy in the waste of his father’s fortune, for that father’s life of toil and self-denial? It is to be hoped that these flags will prevent such indifference on the part of our posterity. Think of them grouped all in one chamber! What descendant of a loyal man could enter it and look upon them and not think of the ancestral sacrifices they both attest and perpetuate? And when the foreigner, dreaming it may be of invasion or conquest or ambition, political or military more dangerous now than all the kings, come into their presence, as come they will, though they be not oppressed with reverence or dumb-stricken with awe, as you and I and others like us may be, doubt not that they will go away wiser than they came; they will be reminded of what the Frenchman had not heard when he landed his legions on the palmy shore of Mexico; of what rulers of England overlooked when they made such haste to recognize the Rebellion; of what the trained leaders of the Rebellion themselves took not into account when they led their misguided followers into the fields of war; they will be reminded that this people, so given to peace, so devoted to trade, mechanics, and agriculture, so occupied with schools and churches, and a government which does their will through the noiseless agency of the ballot-box, have yet, when aroused, a power of resistance sufficient for any need however great; that this nationality, yet in its youth’s first freshness, is like a hive of human bees—stand by it quietly, and you will be charmed by its proofs of industry, its faculty of appliance, its well-ordered labor; but touch it, shake it rudely, menace its population, or put them in fear, and they will pour from their cells an armed myriad whom there is no confronting.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“Fellow-Citizens, Comrades:

“When we come visiting the old flags, and take out those more especially endeared to us because under them we each rendered our individual service, such as it was, we will not fail to be reminded of those other comrades—alas, too many to be named!—who dropped one by one out of the ranks or the column, to answer at roll-call never more; whose honorable discharges were given them by the fever in the hospital or by a bullet in battle; whose bones lie in shallow graves in the cypress swamp, in the river’s deepening bed, in the valley’s Sabbath stillness, or on the mountain’s breast, bleakened now by tempests human as well as elemental. For their sakes, let us resolve to come here with every recurrence of this day, and bring the old colors to the sunlight and carry them in procession, and salute them martially with roll of drums and thunder of guns. So will those other comrades of whom I speak know that they are remembered at least by us, and so will be remembered by them.

“In the armies of Persia was a chosen band called the Immortals. They numbered ten thousand; their ranks were always full, and their place was near the person of the king. The old poet sings of this resplendent host, as clad in the richest armor, and bearing spears pointed with pomegranates of silver and gold. We, too, have our Immortals! Only ours wear uniforms of light. And they number more than ten times ten thousand. And instead of a king to serve they have for leader and lover that man of God and the people, Lincoln the Martyr. On their rolls shine the heroic names, without regard to paltry distinctions as to rank or state; among them are no officers, no privates; in the bivouacs of heaven they are all alike Immortals. Of such are Ellsworth, Baker, Wadsworth, Sedgwick, and McPherson. Of such also are our Hackleman, Gerber, Tanner, Blinn, and Carroll, and that multitude of our soldiers who, victims of the war, are now ‘at the front,’ while we ‘are waiting in reserve.’ ”

VI

General Sturm (from letter to Diaz)—Resignation from the army.  
November 4, 1865 — Mexican loan — History of personal claims  
against Mexico—Offer of commission by Mexico—Private letters  
from Matamoras, Roma, etc.

WHEN the commission detailed for the trial of Wirz finished its work and was dismissed, General Wallace returned to his home in Crawfordsville.

During this time he was constantly occupied in various ways, as was his habit. Although, through the disbanding of the Confederate armies at the close of the Civil War, the danger of coalition between those forces and the Mexican Imperialists had been happily averted, he still maintained a keen interest in the cause of the Mexican Liberals. He was on friendly terms with Señor Romero, the accredited diplomatic representative from Mexico to the United States, and with General Carvajal, who still remained in Washington befriending his countrymen by advancing their interests wherever it was possible. General Wallace secured a strong aid in General Hermann Sturm. Of their combined efforts, a little later, he wrote in the concluding paragraphs of the letter to President Diaz, a portion of which has been already quoted.

“Under full persuasion that General Carvajal’s authority was ample to justify him in attempting, assisted by Minister Romeró, to place a loan in my country, from the proceeds of which the two together could supply the needs of President Juarez; persuaded, also, that this was

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the best course to be taken to prevent Confederates joining Maximilian, particularly after General Grant approved my action, I returned to my command at Baltimore. About a month afterwards I received a note from General Carvajal, informing me of his inability to do anything, and claiming my help, as promised. I advised with President Lincoln and General Grant, and obtained their permission to go to his assistance. In New York it soon became apparent that other assistance was required, and I suggested the employment of General Hermann Sturm, then chief of ordnance for Governor Oliver P. Morton, of Indiana. I knew him to be an honorable man, and expert in arms and munitions of war, full of experience in their purchase, and especially favored with a general acquaintance with the business men of New York, outside of which it was hopeless attempting anything. His military rank was that of brigadier-general. But what was of special influence, I knew him to be possessed of money in his own right, and that he could command more from members of his family and friends. I say this was influential for the reason that General Carvajal did not have means sufficient to pay his hotel bills. I was doing that for him. At the same time Minister Romero was in no sense responsible for General Carvajal's condition. He would doubtless have assisted him if it had been in his power.

"The suggestion proved acceptable both to General Carvajal and Minister Romero. I telegraphed General Sturm, then at Indianapolis. An arrangement was effected with him. The terms of the arrangement I do not remember. I only know that at the time neither of the contracting parties had any approximate idea of the time and labor that would be exacted of them.

"The first effort was to place a loan on behalf of the Mexican Republic. Bonds were printed and the certification was all that could be asked. They proved unacceptable. In the effort General Sturm was so efficient, so energetic, so faithful, that he commended himself to Minister Romero, who, when General Carvajal was retired,



continued the business, and General Sturm as his chief assistant. In course of that attempt it was discovered that the bonds could be made available for the purchase of guns, pistols, cartridges, powder, sabres, torpedoes, ships, etc. The loan was abandoned. In the new scheme again General Sturm was invaluable. Here his experience, skill, knowledge of dealers and prices, his tirelessness and loyalty were successful. Of all this, Minister Romero is a better witness. In one of his reports—I refer to it from recollection—he states officially that six or seven armies of the republic were provided through the instrumentality states. This, your excellency, was due in very great part to General Sturm. The arms were good. With them every time your troops met the enemy they were victorious. How shall the value of such services be measured? By what standard, except the liberty of your people, not to speak of the life of republican Mexico? It would insult you to speak here as an accountant; time, energy, judgment, faithfulness, especially money advanced in aid of the cause he espoused, are items which cannot all be tabulated and cast up. One thing I know, he impoverished himself, his family, and many of his friends in the work to which he dedicated himself.”

In this letter General Wallace made a strong and generous appeal to President Diaz that the Mexican Republic, by this time firmly established, should deal justly with his friend and co-worker.

The co-operation of J. N. Tifft, a New York broker, had also been secured, and the extent to which his sympathies had been enlisted is shown in a letter dated September 14, 1865, where he writes:

“Personally I have honor, reputation, and money at stake, and the claims will not be neglected nor suffer, if my life and health are spared; and in addition to these claims are the hopes and fortunes of a suffering, outraged people, as

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

well as those of their generous friends and defenders. Be assured I am fully 'up' to the work before me, and my partners and associates are eager and confident. We shall place this loan, if the people of the United States are not crazy, and entirely lost to the principles of humanity and self-interest."

November 4, 1865, General Wallace formerly tendered the resignation of his commission as major-general of U. S. Volunteers, to take effect on the 20th of the month, the disbanding of the great volunteer army, which had fought so heroically for the preservation of the Union, having already begun. The resignation, which had been presented in Washington to the assistant adjutant-general, concluded in the words:

"I have no knowledge of indebtedness to the government, or any reason why the tender should not be accepted."

Shortly after this he went to New York, still interested and active in Mexican affairs. From General John M. Schofield he received a note to General Grant, in which the writer stated that General Wallace would call upon him, and he was asked to comply with General Wallace's wishes, if practicable, as the matter which he would present was of importance.

The call, apparently, was not paid; but on November 16, 1865, General Wallace wrote to General Grant as follows:

"You will be so busily engaged to-day, and I myself will be so busy, that to make certain I've concluded to put my matter in form of a note.

"Colonel H. Clay Crawford, of Tennessee, is now *en route* for the Rio Grande, with instructions and authority and means to rendezvous all soldiers whom he may be able

to procure in that vicinity for the Mexican service. Wouldn't it be advisable that the commanding officer in that district be advised of the fact, so that the colonel be not too closely watched? This step will also require that some of the arms at New Orleans be put in our reach at a moment's notice. For this purpose, I submit to you, as does General Schofield, whose note, hastily written, I enclose, whether it would be advisable immediately to direct an officer, or some competent person, to overhaul the arms in depot at New Orleans, ascertain their caliber, and put them (if they are not already) in condition for service and shipment.

"As will be readily understood, it would be of immense service to us, if we could have the shipment of the arms and two or three millions of cartridges by the government to Brownsville. I do not mean the whole store, but five or ten thousand muskets, the latter number if possible. If you conclude to send a party to overhaul the arms, wouldn't it be better that the person authorized be one in our confidence? There would then, it seems to me, be no need of explanation on your part.

"I will be back between twelve and one o'clock to make an effort to get word with you; if that is impossible, I trust you will extend our confidence far enough to give me your views and conclusions on the points submitted."

His errand was unsuccessful, so far as his efforts to negotiate a loan in New York was concerned, a measure at that time of vital importance to Mexico, and he returned to Indianapolis. One month later (December 14, 1865) he wrote a letter to General Grant, in which he said:

"After working in New York in behalf of the Mexican loan until I became satisfied that it was for the present hopeless in that section, I came West; now, after a pretty thorough trial, I have concluded, greatly against my wishes, that the enterprise is equally desperate here. With all the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

influences at my command, backed by a confidential report of an interview had with the president by Hon. Robert Dale Owen, in which the former almost directly requests capitalists to interest themselves, I cannot get respectable bankers to do so much as undertake the sale of the bonds.

“In General Schofield’s absence, I have thought it best to inform you of the failure, that you may understand the true cause of the delay in our movement, and be able to submit the matter to the president, and devise, if you consider it best, some remedial action.

“Everywhere I find sympathy with the cause. I will even go so far as to say that I have not met one intelligent man, East or West, who does not assert that the government should take position and immediate action to relieve Mexico. Unfortunately, this opinion is the very cause of the failure of the loan. People whom I address on the subject say, with a unanimity really astonishing:

“‘Why should we take a Mexican bond? We doubt the Mexican faith; we have no assurance that if Maximilian were driven away the Mexicans could manage their resources so as to meet promptly the interest or principal on their bonds. The inducements offered don’t compensate for the risks.’

“‘But,’ I reply, ‘our government is friendly to this loan. It would like to see our citizens take every dollar of it.’

“‘Then let the government say so publicly. Let it assure us that we will be indemnified.’ In short, the invariable conclusion is that it is the duty of the government to give instant notice to Maximilian to get out, and, if he declines, to drive him by force of arms. And everybody believes that it will do so before the winter is over. Inquire the reason of this faith, and the reply is, ‘Grant is in favor of that course, and he wouldn’t say so unless the president agreed with him.’

“One of the consequences, therefore, is, that unless the president or Congress will do something more explicit towards the relief of Juarez, we can do nothing further in raising the necessary funds from our citizens.



## LEW WALLACE

"In my last interview with Mr. Romero I urged him to let me have the use of the bonds for the purpose of contracting for material and transportation, and in the way of bounties and monthly pay. This he declined on the ground that it would ruin the loan. And now I find myself at my wits' end, compelled to turn to you or the president."

General Grant was urged to lend his aid in the matter, and it was suggested that the Senate might be empowered to take action in executive session, Mr. Romero, on his side, having full authority from his government to take such steps as he deemed prudent. General Wallace wrote, in conclusion :

"Please consider these suggestions, and see if something cannot be done to enable me at least to begin the expected operations. I grow more and more impatient every day. I feel that Matamoras, as a base, ought to be in Liberal hands before General Schofield returns from France. Help us if you can."

It is not to be supposed that a man so courageous and persevering would be baffled or turned aside from his purpose by ordinary discouragements; in this crisis, as in all others, they simply roused in General Wallace a more steadfast determination to aid in all possible ways what he believed to be the vindication of Mexican independence.

His personal transactions with Juarez and Carvajal, and what followed, briefly touched upon in the letter to President Diaz, were more fully stated in a formal claim lodged with the Mexican government in 1869, through which he was years afterwards reimbursed for money which he had personally expended in its behalf.

"General Carvajal," he says, "set foot in Washington City in the latter part of March, 1865. Never was a man

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

more solicitous to do his duty and serve his country. In all Mexico, probably, there was not another better qualified for the task intrusted him. He graduated at Bethany College, Virginia; he talked and wrote English as if it had been his mother-tongue; he was American in tastes and ideas. Yet with all these advantages he found himself unable to start his business. He knew nobody; the proprieties, to say nothing of his doubtful relations with Mr. Seward, held Mr. Romero, the Mexican minister, to the utmost circumspection of conduct; a single violation of our neutrality laws might not only defeat the object of the mission, but subject all enlisted in it to criminal prosecutions; superior to all, however, was the total lack of faith in the Mexican character and ability; that was the real giant to be overcome. In his emergency he turned to me, then in command of the Middle Department, headquarters at Baltimore, Maryland, and on April 26 (1865), by letter tendered me a major-general's commission in the Mexican service, with command of a corps of Americans."

With this tender of a commission, proper remuneration was promised, which, as General Wallace states, "would secure my family beyond the chances of want, or, provision in the event of my death."

As to the proffered commission, General Wallace makes a satisfactory explanation, referring to a letter from General Carvajal, which he had received April 26th.

"It will be seen that it was expressly stipulated that I was not to resign my commission in the United States army until the progress of our war would permit me to do so honorably.

"My connection with General Carvajal, from his coming to me at Brazos to the day of my resignation, was known and sanctioned at the headquarters of that army."

The duties assigned General Wallace upon his acceptance of Carvajal's propositions, the following year (1866) were to put him in communication with persons best able to aid him financially, and to assist him in procuring munitions of war to be despatched to the Mexican Liberals, and finally to organize and conduct a corps of American veterans to take service under the Liberal flag, if this were possible without violation of the neutrality laws. At this crisis General Hermann Sturm was interested, as has been shown. At General Wallace's suggestion General Carvajal gave General Sturm "authority in writing duly authenticated, to do and perform for him duties which, under the military regulations of the United States, belonged to the bureau of the quartermaster, commissary and ordnance departments, a post which he was free to accept, the Civil War in the United States being at an end.

Messrs. John W. Corlies & Company, of New York, with whom Mr. J. M. Tifft was associated, had been unable to sell the bonds which they issued, though a few were disposed of through the efforts of General Wallace and General Sturm, and they were finally allowed to use them for the purchase of arms and supplies. But this was accomplished, as General Wallace wrote, only after long delay—"months precious to the Mexican cause." In the mean time General Carvajal had been ordered by President Juarez to submit all his contracts to Señor Romero for his approval, which led to difference and further delay.

In spite of all difficulties, and they were many and discouraging, supplies were bought, as General Wallace stated, "to the amount of millions, including everything essential to the equipment of an English, French, or American army, and steamers were chartered to transport and deliver the purchases."



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Continuing his statement from this point, General Wallace writes:

"Thereupon General Carvajal hastened home to secure possession of the port of Matamoras, while I went West and made arrangements with chosen officers for the organization of three brigades of veterans, one in Illinois, one in Indiana, and one in Tennessee. In the midst of this work, but not until my Tennessee brigade was so far perfected as to be ready to move upon orders, a telegram came for me to return to New York. Arriving there I found the steamer *Everman* loading with military stores, and that it was thought best for me to undertake to deliver them to General Carvajal in Matamoras, which by a turn of fortune had fallen into his hands. Two other steamers, the *Suwanee* and the *General Sheridan*, were to follow, the former loaded with arms, guns, etc., the latter to be turned over to the Mexican authorities. I am free to say it was no fault of mine that Napoleon and France were not made, by bitter experience, to know how easy it is for one vessel to destroy the commerce of a great nation.

"The *Everman* sailed from New York the latter part of July, after notice given of the day and hour of her departure. With Mr. W. F. Stocking as supercargo, I took her to Matamoras. While delivering the goods to General Carvajal at that port, a successful revolution fomented by General Canales (an Imperialist) took place. The governor was driven to Brownsville (Texas) literally at the lance's point. The stores became the property of the revolutionists and I their prisoner. When released, at the risk of our lives, Mr. Stocking and I succeeded in transferring the cargo to the American side of the river, and ultimately it was delivered, a part to the Liberal authorities at Tampico, and a part to General Escobedo in Monterey. In due time the *General Sheridan* arrived. The *Suwanee*, less fortunate, was wrecked off the Florida Keys, and nothing saved but her crew. Meantime Carvajal's misfortune had deranged our programme of operations. For instance, to whom was



## LEW WALLACE

I to report the *Sheridan*? What was to become of my American soldiers? . . . Carvajal was an exile; Escobedo, commanding at Monterey, refused at that time to take any responsibility; nothing, in short, was left me but to report to President Juarez himself, then at his seat of government in the remote city of Chihuahua, whither, accordingly, I proceeded.

"I remained in Chihuahua about five months, pressing my business and accomplishing nothing except a release from that part of my agreement with Carvajal relating to the division of Americans."

In the subsequent shifting of the seat of government from Durango, where it was removed from Chihuahua to Zacatecas, General Wallace was left alone, as he says, "to find his way as best he could through the desert and over the infested highways to Saltillo." He says, in his conclusion:

"Meanwhile General Sturm, in connection with Mr. Romero, persisted in his work in the United States, and was fortunate enough to be able to land and deliver a cargo of arms to the agents of General Porfirio Diaz, operating between Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico. The withdrawal of the French began, and as they retired the Liberals closed in upon the capital in four columns, one from the north, under Aranda; one from the Rio Grande, under Escobedo; one from the Pacific, under Corona; and one from the south, under Diaz. Of these columns, the most important, that of Diaz and that of Escobedo, were in great part equipped by Sturm and, I under the Carvajal arrangement—most of the effective muskets, or quite all that could be accounted first-class arms, borne by those armies, were furnished through our instrumentality."

On May 11, 1867, by letter to Mr. Romero, in Washington, General Wallace concluded his connection with

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the Mexican government, except as its creditor. From the beginning to the end he paid his own way "without receipt of the value of a *claco*" from the government, and no reimbursement was made until twenty years later.

The cargo which the *Everman* carried, stored under her decks and hidden in other safe places, was a secret which was carefully kept from the public. The loading had been a time of anxiety, as appears in the following letter which he wrote his wife on the eve of sailing:

"NEW YORK, *July* 26, 1866.

"The whistle has just blown in signal of departure. A little tug lies alongside of us to tow us out. Our clearance papers are correct, and now nobody can interfere with us. So I may write the promised farewell letter. Yesterday the morning papers mentioned our vessel, the *Everman*, as loading with bread-stuffs for Texas, taking a few arms for anybody who would buy them. Something similar is repeated to-day. With these exceptions no attention has been paid to the loading and departure of a vessel which may yet occasion a great deal of international excitement, simply because we take out enough war *material* to outfit a column of nearly seven thousand soldiers.

"I am very well and glad to be getting off. Impatience has caused me a deal of trouble, as you may imagine. I have only to repeat that my confidence in the result is still undiminished. I believe I can be of great service to that people. It is all in the hands of Providence. Will write again at Brazos; be of good cheer. . . .

"The captain assures me that the steamer will arrive off Brazos about nine o'clock this evening; and as it is necessary for me to go with speed to Matamoras, I write about eighty miles out, to forward the letter from Brazos.

"We left New York on Thursday, July 24th; supposing the captain right in his reckoning, we will have been thirteen days at sea, longer by five days than the time required to

go to Europe. Our course was down the coast, often in sight of land, the object being to keep inside the Gulf Stream, whose current would be against us at the rate of three and a half miles an hour. This, of course, carried us between the West Indies and the Keys of Florida. We passed the Dry Tortugas, and then steered due west out into the heart of the Gulf of Mexico.

"Our captain, an ancient mariner, says he never saw so many delightful days following each other in succession as on this voyage. Except a storm, the second night out, there has been nothing to break the calm of the sea. Placid it must have been to allow us to see the bottom, fifty feet below us, as distinctly as if we were separated from it only by a sheet of pure plate-glass. This lasted for many miles between Cuba and the Keys. It would have delighted Henry. Looking over the steamer's prow, he could see, distinctly as in a trout-brook, myriads of flying fish, dolphins of brightest color, with here and there hungry sharks, following us with bloody hope, and very often great lubberly sea-turtles, sprawled out on the glistening white sand, or half-hidden in little coral graves, over which we sailed as aeronauts sail in a balloon.

"My health is perfect. Of sea-sickness I know nothing. On the contrary, I have actually enjoyed the motion of the ship swinging ceaselessly on the long rolls of the waves. Of course, the sun has shone fiercely. In the day it has seemed as if we were floating on an ocean of molten silver. The nights were unspeakably beautiful. I have felt all that made Byron so distraught with the deep and dark blue sea.

"The question close upon us is: can I succeed in landing in Matamoras the *material*—contraband with the French—now in our ship's hold? Of that I can say nothing positively. I do not know what is in waiting for us; what I fear is that something may have transpired since leaving New York to alter the policy of the government towards us. Sheridan, in that case, would be more formidable than any Frenchman. Still, I am hopeful and confident. I will



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

do and dare to the utmost, trusting in the Providence which seems thus far to have been so favorable to us. I shall decide nothing rashly or hurriedly, and shall take all precautions the situation will allow.

"At Brownsville I hope to find mail, and am curious to know if the newspapers have got hold of our enterprise, and what is said of it. Considering the long time we were loading at one of the most public piers in New York harbor, it is strange the press did not open on us long ago. Indeed, the management up to our sailing was very good. A reporter for the *Evening Express* did get on our track; fortunately, we found it out in time to buy him up. Altogether, the land will be a great deal more interesting than it ordinarily is at the end of a voyage."

Again he writes from Brownsville, August 16th:

"I am very well, except that hands and face are swollen with mosquito-bites, and feet and ankles raw with flea-bites.

"By the papers there will doubtless be terrible stories of the fortunes and misfortunes of this expedition, growing out of the revolution which took place the day after our arrival in Matamoras. Whatever the stories may be, taken altogether, that was the funniest affair I ever beheld.

"General Carvajal had to run for his life. I remained behind to take care of his family, and make terms for his two boys. In the town not a shot was fired, not a person hurt, yet the revolution was complete. General Carvajal went out, his adopted son, and (as he has since proved) his true friend, went in. My greatest trouble was that the goods of the New-Yorkers, consisting of large quantities of arms and munitions of war, were being landed on the Mexican side of the river. Next day, however, I succeeded in getting an order from Canales, the new governor, to return the whole cargo to the American shore, and to-day they are being brought over.

"The revolt was certainly disgraceful. It was conceived



## LEW WALLACE

and executed by the thieves, bandits, and outlaws who have congregated by hundreds in Matamoras, which, as respects the rest of Mexico, has always been what the Five Points are to New York. For about two hours I was a prisoner, in some danger, not knowing my doom. The governor, Canales, quickly released me, with General Carvajal's family, and the Americans who were with me. Ever since we have been living in the city unmolested after the 'bloodless revolution.'

"I shall soon go to Monterey in behalf of the New-Yorkers whose goods are so unexpectedly thrown on my hands for disposition. Fortunately, I have a bright young man to assist, full of energy and admirable in such business. Soon as the property is sold I will come home, and remain until the Mexican government sends the 'sinews' required to carry out its purposes.

"The weather is very warm, but not more so than at home. There is no sign of cholera or sickness of any kind. Be warned against newspaper reports. Correspondents are here revelling in news over which they pour floods of ink in exaggerated colors. Their head-lines and details will be in hectic chromo."

From Roma he writes, August 27, 1866:

"I am setting out for Monterey. We have for mode of travel a first-rate 'cab,' Washington City style. My companions are two pleasant gentlemen, and the journey will take three days, or, rather, nights, as the sun is too powerful for day travel. Our way is exactly the road we marched over eighteen years ago. I will have old memories at every step. It is supposed President Juarez will be in Monterey when we reach there. A possibility of interruption by brigands on the road will keep us on the *qui vive*, and make the transit the more interesting.

"Terribly hot. I am oozing at every pore. The nights, however, are sweet and sleepful."

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### VII

Private letters from Monterey, Chihuahua, etc.—Evacuation of the French—Execution of Maximilian, July 17, 1867.

GENERAL WALLACE'S next letters are from Monterey to his wife, the first dated September 7, 1866:

"Here again; it really seems incredible. To fix the fact in mind I have sometimes to go to the door of my room, or to one of my iron-barred windows, and look out to where the great purple mountains lift their treeless crests against the sky, overshadowing everything.

"My first view of this place was through eyes not yet twenty-one years old. You know how enthusiastic I have always been when speaking about the beauty of its situation. Over and over again have I said, if this region should ever become the property of our government, I should live in Monterey. I was almost afraid to look upon it again; twenty years may not change the valley, or alter the faces of the mountains, but they have much to do with the effect produced upon us by the appearance of things. So I was fearful of disappointment. But I can say now that I have seen just two things that did not fail my ardent expectation, born of long dreams—Niagara and Monterey.

"There are the mountains just as they used to be. Through the pure, wonderful atmosphere which seems to be an enlargement, like a telescope, they stand close to us—so close that one can form no idea of distance. If I did not know that a certain peak is quite ten miles away, I should feel sure I could throw a stone on the top of it. I go along the street or the road thinking, and, looking up suddenly, am,

for a moment startled by what appears a cloud, not suspended in air, but resting solidly on the earth. What fascination high mountains have for me, whose life had been upon the plain! In one of Dickens's novels is a boy, half foolish, who is made to sit for hours talking to the clothes drying upon the line and flapping in the wind. Sometimes I think of the poor fellow when I catch myself watching, with strange interest, the white clouds which linger the long day through, half-way up Saddle Mountain, curling round and round it in wreaths lighter than mist.

"According to the custom of this country, one takes coffee in bed and breakfast at eleven. I have improved on the fashion. When the boy brings coffee he also brings a tray of fruit. On the table now are peaches, apples, pears, grapes, oranges, pomegranates, fresh and luscious—especially the grapes and pears. This is luxury to a lover of fruit like me. And then the water, so cool and refreshing you forget all about ice. What a difference between a glassful from the mossy old well at my door and the red-stained, sandy fluid which makes life on the Rio Grande intolerable!

"There are no mosquitoes to molest me, and in this soft, sweet night air we may sleep with the sky for a tent, and fear neither rain nor fever. There is a satisfactory trust in the climate unknown at the north. I repeat, if it was under our flag, I would rather live in Monterey than any spot I ever saw.

"Yesterday, with a party, I went about two leagues on the Saltillo road to visit one of my countrymen, very wealthy, intensely loyal, and at the head of a manufacturing company.

"In the factory, at the foot of a great mountain, he manages countless spindles, almost rivalling those of Lowell. I never received a heartier welcome from a stranger than he gave me. It was a pleasant thing, coming in Old Mexico, and next week I am to spend a few days with him in a retreat he has built by a lake away up in the mountains which overlook his factory. He promises a white



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

frost at night, speckled trout in abundance, and the grandest scenery I ever beheld.

"This state (Nuevo Leon) is governed at present by General Escobedo. Through his courtesy I have a carriage and horses at command. After four o'clock I ride through the city or out in the valleys. The characteristic indolence and procrastination of the Mexican make it impossible to predict a conclusion. There is much to see and enjoy, and I bide my time more patiently than usual. How I wish I had brought my box of colors, for here are palms, plantains, bananas, etc., without end, and living pictures innumerable!"

"MONTEREY, *September 11, 1866.*

"To-morrow we are to visit 'Walnut Springs,' the place of our old encampment, and for daily amusement we are having the grand *fiesta*, which is to last ten days. It is understood to be a 'fair.' The word recalls to mind the idea of a great cattle and manufacturing show, like those at Indianapolis. A Mexican fair is simply a great assemblage of people from all parts of the state to indulge the national passion for gambling. By night the grand plaza will be illuminated, and there will be seen a mass of booths and tents, each containing its different gambling apparatus from '*monte*' to 'chuck-a-luck,' and thither press crowds in best attire, old and young, men, women, and children, eager to try their chances. And such a scene! And to think that this monstrous popular demoralizer is actually licensed by the church and state for the express purpose! It is only when I move through the actors in this play that I feel the cause of Mexican regeneration is hopeless. Who can change it? And when can the change take place? I question, but may not answer.

"The opinion is fast becoming general among officers and citizens that the French must leave the country. A few days ago I saw some captured official letters which indicate that the evacuation is not far off. The same documents show that Maximilian has no intention of going.



## LEW WALLACE

He will stay if that is possible; and such an attempt is idle. The Mexican people, factious in everything else, are a unit against him, and for that reason they will win."

"MONTEREY, *September 23, 1866.*

"Sunday again; overhead and along the mountain-sides it looks like the holy day, all peaceful and still; but in the city there is no Sabbath sign, except that the ancient and cracked bells, ironically called the chimes, are rung about every fifteen minutes instead of every hour as on week-days.

"I have found a congenial friend, not of the school-boy article, in the travelled correspondent of the *New York Herald*. I set out with him at the usual hour, half after ten o'clock, to see the service in the cathedral. To reach it we traversed the main streets. The shops, groceries, etc., were open and in full blast. In the plaza the *fiesta* still holds. At every booth we found the usual crowd of gamblers, male and female, mixed this time with a heavy reinforcement of beggars. And such beggars! Loathsome, wretched, appalling specimens of humanity. Thank God for the poor-houses of our land! I never valued them before. The cathedral we found nearly empty. Only a few worshippers were present—all women. The men were out in the square loafing or 'fighting the tiger.' The women were gazing at the figures with fixedness and awe. A few turned to look at us as we entered. I looked at two fantastic attempts in wax, life-size, profanely christened 'Christ' and the 'Holy Mother,' happy recipients of homage. The former is covered with dust. His principal garment is a nondescript gown of faded purple velvet. Appealing to a former experience of mine, I am sure the out-stretched hand contains 'something catching.' The gown is rich enough, but not long enough to conceal a defect in one of his legs. A surgeon could best say whether the limb had been broken and badly set by a quack, or whether it was really a leg or not. The Virgin was more respectable; woman-like, she was also more pretentious, since she wore

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

hoop-skirts. A brass apparatus about her head was intended to represent a halo. Altogether, I could not feel devotional; probably because I am *uno de los demonios del Norte*.

"From the cathedral we crossed over to the chapel, formerly a priory of the Franciscan order, I believe. I found it full of corn, fodder, and forage. Decay was everywhere. The floor consists of long rows of trap-doors, each door covering a tomb in which rest the bones of generations of monks and nuns. The walls yet display fading traces of glory, little altars of alabaster, and a few columns to which cling fluttering rags of tinsel. My impression on leaving the house was that it fitly represents the condition of the Church in Mexico, the Church as it now is.

"In my last note, sent by way of San Antonio, I was about to describe a cave to which I have been. I have no doubt the Pescaria cavern, while not the longest, nor the most beautiful, has qualities which make it one of the most remarkable in the world. Such proportions, such majesty in everything, is the first impression it conveys. There are rooms in it large enough to contain two such buildings, piled one above the other, as the Capitol at Washington. Each one is lined with stalagmites, columnar and fluted, and wrought by nature so exquisitely that the famous old Greek would blush to find his best work set up in comparison. Eight of them would have given Angelo a dozen St. Peters, each one superior to that which has crazed the world in Rome. Moving through it, candle in hand, I felt as though I were traversing a mountain within a mountain. If I should ever be employed to illustrate a new 'Paradise Lost,' and lacking ideas of hell, I shall return to and live awhile in Pescaria cave.

"We are looking for President Juarez."

From Chihuahua, October 5th, he wrote:

"A<sup>n</sup> mail leaves to-day. That is, an individual sets out for El Paso, travelling nights and hiding in the bushes by

day. Such are the postal facilities of this region; and as the Indians have the roads, my chance is small.

"The attachés of this government, from President Juarez down, are very polite and kind to me. My opinion of the president grows better every day. Without doubt he is a true patriot and a great man; and as to his cabinet, it is composed of men equal to ours. I have seen a good deal of them lately, and what I thought before I am sure of now.

"Chihuahua lies deep in a valley ringed with mountains. Ask the name of this and that, and you will be told, and that a famous mine old and new is in it. In other words, this is the heart of one of the greatest, if not the very greatest, silver-mining regions of the earth. And as respects climate, it is equal if not superior to California. We have been here two weeks, and in that time there has been a variation of three degrees by the thermometer, which takes place every day after set of sun. No fire is needed by day, at night two blankets. And then the air is indescribably sweet and pure, like wine of which you cannot drink too much. And the water, clear as glass, cold as snow—delicious!

"We were nineteen days out. A long, toilsome journey, but full of interest. Our road was through the old mineral region of Chihuahua. It led through broad, grass-covered valleys, with mountains blue and beautiful always in sight. The eye wandered continually from the thousand varieties of cactus, from palmetto and yellow herbage, bordering the way, up to the Sierras, which we studied wonderingly, thinking that somewhere within their gray ridges lay hidden wealth enough for all the kings, if only the 'leads' could be discovered. It was a delightful journey.

"Of the towns on the route none attracted me so much as Hidalgo; not on account of its beauty, for the Mexican town is beautiful only in situation, never *per se*, but because of its antiquity and locality. It is over two hundred and fifty years old. The Spaniards of the Cortés school penetrated Mexico in all directions—from Mexico City to Chihuahua they marched; from Chihuahua to California; and



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

as they proceeded they ferreted out, doubtless aided by Indians, all the mountains rich with silver and gold, and in *their* vicinity founded a colony, and gathered in the natives and set them to digging in gangs. Every abandoned mine—abandoned because driven down to the water-line or because exhausted of ore—is a black, dreary memento of the poor wretches lost in the hopeless, stony labor. Such is Hidalgo. Its houses, built of adobe, with foundations of silver ore, creep up on the mountain's side, until from their doors you can step into the doors of the mines.

“Walking out you find the mountain literally honey-combed with tunnels. Each mine has its name, and around it lingers some sad or wonderful tradition, known well by the sooty workmen with whom you may stop to speak. At the furnaces are hills of slag, or refuse metal from which the ore has been extracted, which will repay working over with modern processes. Pick up the broken masses of quartz or stone with which the whole base of the mountain is covered, and upon inquiry you learn that the specimens in your hand are worth from eight to a hundred dollars for three hundred pounds. How rich those mines have been, and yet are! How much they would yield if governed by intelligence!

“Thanks to Governor Viesca, we have relays of mules and horses, and easy carriage, and sharp, practised servants enabling us to make easily fifteen leagues and sometimes twenty leagues a day. Arriving at a town or *hacienda*, where it was necessary to pass the night, we drove to the *casa grande*, or house of the judge or *administrador*, who, upon the production of our papers, at once gave us most comfortable rooms. With their assistance, also, we went where we pleased—to mines, cathedrals, gardens—and with little trouble and no hinderance picked up everything in the several localities which had an interest for the stranger.

“Such an opportunity to ‘do’ northern Mexico seldom comes to the traveller, and now I am here I look back and wonder at my ignorance of the country. I had been



accustomed to think of Coahuila, Durango, and Chihuahua as deserts broken with mountains and valuable only for their minerals. What a mistake! They are really interminable pastures. I have seen cornfields continuous, fifteen and twenty square miles, now ready to give the farmer his second crop for this year. I have seen vast wheat-fields, side by side with fields of cotton white with bursting bolls. I have ridden a whole day across pastures, including plain and mountain, rich and soft as those in the blue-grass region of Kentucky, and have never been out of sight of herds—sheep, cattle, goats—which graze and fatten there, without resort to other food, all the year round.

“You ask why more is not made of the country?

“There are three reasons. Wars which render peaceful pursuits impossible to foreigners; second, the whole country belongs to a few men—one man, Carlos Sanchez, owns more than the whole State of Coahuila; third, the Indians and robbers. The sad effects of the latter cause are discernible at every step. You see them in the arms the men carry on the roads, and to their fields and pastures; in the universal distrust which they have of one another; in the construction of houses, each being a fort more than dwelling; more than all, you are conscious of the effects I speak of when you find yourself putting on pistols, knowing them as essential as boots or hat.

“To illustrate: at Mapini the judge notified us that a party of Indians were on our track committing horrors indescribable. Twice in one day we halted and prepared to fight. At a place named Salitre we slept in the midst of eighty-two Apaches who had the day before killed seven persons there and driven off the inhabitants. At Cerro Gordo we found about fifteen hundred people, refugees driven into the town for safety. To our question of the men, ‘Why don’t you go out and kill the savages?’ they replied, ‘We have no arms.’ And such was the fact. The wars have taken up all the arms; so much so that these poor wretches were shivering under their blankets on the ground, from fear the Apaches would ride into the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

plaza and begin an indiscriminate massacre. I hated to go forward and leave them to expect no mercy from the merciless savages. It was almost inhuman. Our party was composed of three white men and eight Mexicans. When it was told in Cerro Gordo that we had passed the night in Salitre, they cried, '*Per Dio, que valor!*' (My God, what courage!)"

In another letter, of a later date, he gives this account of the social life of the capital:

"CHIHUAHUA, November 11, 1866.

"It must not be supposed this part of the earth is devoid of polite society. Quite a number of foreigners reside here, living in ease and elegance. Slowly but surely their rich Mexican neighbors have been imitating and adopting their modes and manners. Ten years ago such things as fireplaces, windows with glass, carpets, were unknown among the natives of this city. Now they are common. But a stranger has only furtive glimpses of home life when taking his afternoon stroll. The interiors of the houses are sealed to him, and usually the ladies of the house are not to be seen by visitors.

"I was at a dinner yesterday with eight Mexican ladies and five American gentlemen, our host being married to a Mexican, himself a New-Yorker. We were at table eight hours—a thing impossible except in a land of leisure and idleness. Wines from the vineyards of Mexico and France made the feast as merry as these solemn people ever become. A Steinway piano and the finest harp I ever saw, well played, gave us delightful music—an unexpected feast.

"It is quite cool here now, yet how different from the weather at home, where, under bare trees and in snow, Henry is tracking rabbits and waiting for the ice to bear. Here the trees are green, and up the mountain-side, even to its top, the smiling face of the lingering summer is visible. In the morning and evening a little fire takes off the edge of the atmosphere, and all doors and windows are open.

## LEW WALLACE

And it is winter, broken only by a sharp north wind, leaving a skim of ice out-doors. I have been here nearly a month, and the mercury has varied from sixty-three to sixty-seven degrees. I wish I could bottle up the climate and carry it home with me.

"The slow mail brings news of Johnson's defeat. Down with him goes that mass of Union men, civil and military, who fell before the seductions and promises of office—the set who thought to break up the strength which the soldiers gave to the Union party.

"Last week I spent three days among the mines of Santa Eulalia. You know I have always had unqualified admiration for the old Spaniards who came with and followed Cortés. Leaving their battle-fields, to learn the full extent of their daring and force, one must come to the mines. Think of the wonderful results of their labor when I tell you that in many places they have dug into the mountain-side great rooms in which our town, court-house, churches, college could be deposited and still leave room for me to drill a brigade. When I come home I must write a magazine article on Santa Eulalia.

"The 10th of next month the president and his cabinet take up their line of march for the city of Durango, with an excellent prospect for continuing, slowly but surely, to the capital. I shall accompany them as far as Mapini, which is *en route* to Monterey. Homeward bound, but not in time for a Christmas dinner."

The cause in which General Wallace had been so deeply interested, and for which he made many generous sacrifices, finally triumphed. Through the representations of the United States government the French troops were withdrawn, Maximilian's forces were defeated, the emperor fell into the hands of Juarez, and was executed July 17, 1867. Although the country was for some time disturbed by insurrections, the republic was at length permanently re-established.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### VIII

The completion of *The Fair God*—Crocker's letter to Messrs. Osgood & Company—Castelar, Dufferin, Dilke, Donn Piatt—Letter to Mrs. Lane—The romance relating to the Jews—Congressional Library.

GENERAL WALLACE spent portions of two years in Mexico following the varying fortunes of Juarez. He then returned to Crawfordsville, where he occupied himself for a time with the final revision of *The Fair God* and finishing his picture, "The Dead Line." He took part in the political campaign of 1870, and was nominated for Congress by the Republicans of his district. He was attacked by the Democratic press, and was charged with speculating in Mexican bonds while aiding the Liberals in their struggle against the Imperialists. To this he replied:

"Permit me to say that I never did own a Mexican bond; that I do not now own one; that I am not interested, presently or prospectively, in such bonds; that I am not connected with any Mexican ring, or ring of any kind; and that, if elected to Congress, I shall oppose the assumption by our government of any part of the national debt of Mexico. Moreover, the subject of Mexican claims has passed into a treaty, long since ratified and exchanged between the United States and Mexico, any modification of which, as every intelligent citizen knows, is the exclusive business of the Senate, not of the House, for which I am a candidate."

While this statement was readily accepted, General Wallace was defeated by four hundred and fifty-



eight votes, owing to flagrant frauds, chiefly in one locality.

*The Fair God* was completed, and its merit at once recognized by Mr. Crocker, the reader for Messrs. Osgood & Company, to whom the book was submitted. He wrote of it:

“*Mr. J. R. Osgood:*

“DEAR SIR,—It is safe to pronounce this book (I haven’t its title) remarkable in theme and treatment. It is a romance founded on incidents in the invasion of Mexico by Cortés, and seems to be a translation from some old Spanish author, who personally knew some of the actors in that drama, and who has impressed his narrative with a realism truly astonishing. The book is specially fascinating; and, indeed, valuable, by reason of its minute and vivid pictures of Aztec civilization, whose characteristics it brings out in impressive and beautiful relief. The chronicles of fighting, or rather of massacre, are somewhat tedious, abstractly considered; but in their connection the reader can hardly grow weary of them.

“In view of the novelty of its theme—its effective representations of the life of a people almost lost from history, of their strange theogony and their slavish yet noble devotion to it, their unquestioning patriotism, and their desperate maintenance of an unequal struggle against the invaders; in view, especially, of its realism—for every line of it seems to date from the time and place with which the narrative deals—and of its quaintly beautiful style, I do not hesitate to commend it as hardly surpassed in historical fiction, and as a book that there would be honor as well as profit in publishing.

“It is so utterly unlike ordinary novels, so fresh and fascinating, that I think there can hardly be a doubt of its popularity. It is somewhat too long; but some passages might be cut out without injury to the work.”

The book was published in the fall of 1873.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

In England the verdict was most friendly; even the London *Athenæum*, then as now difficult to please, said:

“We do not hesitate to say that *The Fair God* is one of the most powerful historical novels that we have ever read. . . . The opening, like that of most archæological novels, is dull, but the scene where in the sunrise Montezuma reads his fate, the dance scene, and the entrance of the Spaniards to the capital, are drawn in a style of which we think few living writers capable, and the battles are Homeric in their grandeur.”

Of course the book did not escape the fate of every such departure from the beaten track. There were many imitators, and there were charges of plagiarism. Some one discovered that General Wallace had borrowed his theme and many of his ideas from *Malmistic the Toltec*, and *the Cavaliers of the Cross*, a romance then out of print and almost forgotten. Like all such misrepresentation the story soon died a natural death, and was no more heard of.

Letters of congratulation poured in upon the author. General Sherman was one of the first to send his expression of the pleasure that the book had given him. Through General Sickles, then representing the United States at Madrid, Castelar transmitted the following acknowledgment of the copy he had received and read:

“MADRID, November 4, 1873.

“General Lew Wallace :

“DEAR SIR,—I received your very beautiful work, which I preserve in my library as a literary memento and in my heart as a mark of friendship. The cultivation of Spanish history by the most eminent men of Saxon America proves that our nations will be brothers in the succeeding centuries. The sentiments which you have expressed to me are the rescript of those I return to you. I, admir-

## LEW WALLACE

ing in you the writer who by his genius has illustrated the history of my race, and the soldier who has bared his sword in defence of the greatest and most illustrious of modern republics, have expressed to my friend General Sickles my thanks for his care in sending to me your delightful book. Rely always upon my friendship and admiration for you and your country.

“EMILIO CASTELAR.”

From Lord Dufferin:

“December 4, 1881.

“MY DEAR GENERAL WALLACE,—I have the pleasure of sending you the enclosed copy of a note I have just received from Sir Charles Dilke. I congratulate you most warmly upon the pleasant terms in which it is couched.

“Yours sincerely,

“DUFFERIN.”

From Sir Charles Dilke.

“November 25, 1881.

“MY DEAR LORD DUFFERIN,—I was very sorry to miss General Lew Wallace, and, not having his address in London, not to be able to write him. His *The Fair God* is in my humble estimation the best historical novel that ever was written: better than *Romola*, better than *Rienzi*, better than *Old Mortality*. Yours ever sincerely,

“CHARLES W. DILKE.”

The Aztec names were difficult to pronounce, and this gave the author some embarrassment in the choice of his title. The list from which he finally made a happy selection included: “The Last of the Tzins”; “The Last Days of Montezuma”; “Gautamozin the Aztec”; “Montezuma, the God of the Aztecs”; and, finally, “The Fair God.”

In a letter written to his sister-in-law, Mrs. Lane, the widow of the late Senator Henry S. Lane, dated December 21, 1873, he gives the first hint of the new book which he immediately began planning. In this



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

letter, which contains some interesting comments on the Congressional Library, he wrote:

"The library grows visibly. Books, books, a mountain of books. How very delightful to sit among them and lift your eyes from page to picture, to the alcoves and balconies, stories in height, and follow the shelves extending into dim perspective! How the gold lettering on the grounds of scarlet and green illuminates the shadow and seems to people the silence! How intuitively visitors entering the charmed space uncover their heads and move across the tiled floor speaking in whispers—two hundred and fifty thousand volumes! What labor they represent, and what laborers—the thinkers of all lettered times, and of all nations! They overflow the walls. A new building is projected. Sixty plans are already submitted by as many architects. The site chosen is the northwest corner of the garden adjoining the Capitol. Think of a building four stories, a quadrangle four hundred feet on each side, in the centre a circular reading-room one hundred feet in diameter, from which in all directions the deep alcoves radiate—a building to hold three million volumes. Such is the design. When you and 'your good man' make up your minds, as you ought at once, to live in Washington, the library will be more than an attraction, it will be a wonder, one of the wonders of the earth. And we, poor wretches, looking hungrily from afar, will envy you the privilege of spending your leisure in the bookish sanctuary, and the happiness thereof. . . . I spend most of my time in the library. Mr. Spofford and I are on excellent terms. He thinks I have a book in mind—not a very remarkable case of shrewdness, seeing that I have gone through everything on the shelves relating to the Jews. From the mass I selected two works indispensable to my plot. . . . Donn Piatt made himself very agreeable to me a few evenings ago. 'I was in a cab going down-street, one foggy day in London,' he said, 'when I saw your name (mine) in letters a foot long. I couldn't think what they were doing with



## LEW WALLACE

you over there; so I jumped out and ran back to see. It was a big hand-bill announcing your book. I went in and bought one, but had to give it to a lady before having a chance to tell what kind of creation it was. The shop-keeper said it was having a great sale. After that I took pains to inquire; and if we had an international copyright law I am satisfied you would make more money in England than in America.' Of course I told the colonel how much obliged I was. He went on:

"'It was a hit over there. I was out in a literary company one time when the conversation turned on books. I ventured the assertion that no American novel had yet been written. A gentleman took me up quicker than a flash. "You are mistaken, sir. Have you read *The Fair God*?" "No," said I. "Well, I have," said he, "and it is the great American novel.'"

"From these bits you can understand how very agreeable the colonel made himself. Upon coming down-street, I sent him a book with compliments, etc. That was day before yesterday. Next Sunday I suppose he will 'go for me' in the Capitol. Such is his way."

In an interview with the representative of a Chicago newspaper, a little later, General Wallace set at rest exaggerated stories as to the composition of the book.

"I began it," he said, "about 1849, a year or two after the conclusion of the Mexican War, in which I served, when nineteen years of age, as a lieutenant. The work was continued at intervals as I could find time. Sometimes the intervals were years—once, seven years. It was my habit to give the long winter evenings and the Sundays, while in Crawfordsville, to the composition. As I didn't write for bread, I took my leisure. The fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh books were written after the Rebellion. The experience there gained was invaluable to me—in fact, I don't think I could have got on without it. Somebody started the story that I had fin-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ished the book a long time ago and received a rejection. That is a fabrication. Messrs. Osgood & Company, of Boston, were the first publishers to whom I made overtures for the publication. You know the result. In this connection I may as well speak of another fabrication of the same school, and that is, that I wrote and rewrote the book twelve times. You see, they pretend to have got the exact number of times—even twelve. If it had been said of some of the paragraphs, the point would have been good; some of them were written oftener than twelve times. Such, for example, is the speech Cortés makes to his men in council after he resolves to take Montezuma prisoner. It would be hard to say how often I have written and rewritten that paragraph."

When the book appeared, "The Dead Line," the picture which had its inspiration in the grewsome disclosures of the Wirz trial, was placed upon exhibition in Boston. It was pronounced by a writer in the *Transcript* "bold and original in conception, vigorous in handling, and showing great knowledge of drawing and technical skill. Another critic said that it was decidedly realistic, "with much of the terrible in it"; the drawing was commended as "good, while the sombre color well comported with the character of the scene." A third, acknowledging the talent the picture displayed, found it "horribly realistic and revolting," but, in view of the fine execution, expressed a hope that the artist "might try his hand on some pleasanter subject."

From the date of its publication, in the fall of 1873, to April, 1905, there were sold one hundred and forty-five thousand seven hundred and fifty copies of *The Fair God*. With this success the verdict of the first critic to whom the author, then a very young man, submitted the introductory chapters of his story is strangely at variance. This was no less a person than Dr. Charles

## LEW WALLACE

White, the second president of Wabash College, a lineal descendant of Peregrine White of the *Mayflower*, and a man of eminent scholarship.

The young author, unabashed by the somewhat austere dignity of the old president, asked permission to read to him what he had finished. Dr. White listened politely, took off his spectacles, and then gravely advised Mr. Wallace to abandon the field of authorship. He had been long in his grave when *The Fair God* appeared, or he might have had an opportunity to learn how little the wisest of men can foresee the fate of any book.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### IX

Letter to the veterans of the Mexican War—"Commodus"—Letter from Lawrence Barrett—The Florida commission—Interview in the Indianapolis *Journal*—Letter to the illegal "commission."

As soon as the success of *The Fair God* was assured, the author began to shape the Jewish story. But, as with the first book, the work did not progress without frequent interruptions. He was called upon to perform many public duties, and occasionally turned aside to take up something that offered change and diversion for the time, then returning to the romance with renewed interest and energy.

In May, 1874, the veterans of the Indiana regiments that had served in the Mexican War held a convention in Indianapolis. General Wallace received an urgent invitation to be present, which he could not accept. He wrote the following letter to the chairman, however, which was read and warmly received:

"DEAR SIR,—It is a matter of great regret to me that I cannot be present at the meeting to-morrow. No one esteems comradeship more highly than I do; to no one are its memories more delightful; more than anything else, more than business and its cares, more than the hopes and expectancies of the future, they serve to while away my hours of rest and reverie; and for that alone I would not part with my experience as a soldier for any consideration. Since the campaigns of 1847-48, which you are preparing to commemorate, many of us have trodden a much broader field of war, with appointments much more grand; yet I



## LEW WALLACE

venture to assert that there is not one of us to whom the service in Mexico is not a recollection surpassing in interest the most brilliant operation of the Rebellion. The reason is plain. Mexico was a strange land to us all, and full of novelties. There was nothing upon the face of the country with which we were familiar; the trees, the grass, the dusty wastes, the mountains, the modes of cultivation and building, the villages, towns, cities and their inhabitants, and their customs, costumes, and habits, charmed us irresistibly; the sun that shot us full of fevers was a wonder, because of the climate he ruled; but most of all, we reached the unfriendly land by the sea, which we then rode upon the first time, and will remember always as a sounding mystery. I can well understand how every soldier who made the march from Brazos to Matamoras and Monterey, and thence to Saltillo and Buena Vista, would like once more to go over the route and see the country and people again. It has been my fortune to do so several times. The camping-places are all as when we left them. The ranches are unchanged. A few of the towns, like Meir and Caiderita, are considerably grown. Walnut Springs still bubble up from the plain, and the creek they form glides away cooled and darkened by the shade of the same old oak and pecan trees. Passing from them to Monterey, off to the right, one sees the black fort, and above and beyond it, under the brow of the mountain, like a sentinel, the bishop's castle stands overlooking the most beautiful valley on earth, not to say the most beautiful city. It is spattered from base to cupola with bullet-marks and perforated with round-shot, received, many of them, since Worth scaled its rocky pedestal; for civil wars have eddied round it with reddening tides many times since that glorious hour. From the breast of the bluff at the castle's foot leaps the torrent which, divided into channels, rushes through the streets below, now right, now left, passing from garden to garden, here a cascade, there a pool, a moment reflecting the sky, the next green with orange-trees and the banana leaf, broad as a banner, and

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the palm, 'a joy forever.' The vale from Monterey to Saltillo is matchless. The curtains of purple that covered the scarred crags and tinted mountains in the ancient times are there yet, softening everything. On the hill beyond the Rinconada, up which one must go because there is no other way—must go, though it flamed with fire and musket—must go, if he would reach Saltillo—are the earthworks which Taylor's vanguard took in a twinkling, but which the same vanguard could have held against a hundred times their number. Saltillo is but little less flourishing than Monterey. A more un-American place may not be found this side of old Damascus. Yet the traces of the conqueror are everywhere in and about it. Fort Washington is intact, ditch, parapet, and embrasure. Standing on its superior slopes, one sees the whole city at his feet; turning right about, he catches a view of the mountain, six miles off, under which spreads the plateau of Buena Vista—a name to stir the American pulse while America lives.

"I have ridden over the old field three times in the seven years last past, and always with the same feeling of wonder at the audacity of the chief who, with his forty-five hundred, abided there the shock of the Mexican Napoleon's twenty-two thousand, and of admiration at the pluck and endurance of the few who, turned and broken, crushed on the right and left, and, by every rule of scientific battle, whipped oftener than there were hours of the day, knew it not, but rallied and fought on, the infantry now covering the artillery, the artillery defending the infantry, the cavalry overwhelmed by legions of lancers, and union of effort nowhere, fought on, and at last wrung victory from the hands of assured defeat.

"The field is but little changed. The road to La Angostura is still the thoroughfare across it, winding along the foot of the hills on its left, and looking down into the fissures and yawning gaps which made the valley to the right so impassable even to skirmishers. I stopped where the famous battery was planted across the road, literally our last hope, and tried to recall the feeling of the moment,

On the left all was lost; Clay, McKee, Hardin, and Gell were dead; where all were brave, but one regiment was standing fast, the only one which through all the weary hours of the changing struggle had not turned its face from the enemy—I mean the Third Indiana. Against the battery so supported, along the narrow pass, surged a chosen column of Mexicans. History tells how they were rolled back. In all the annals of war nothing more gallant on both sides, scarcely anything more bloody and terrible!

“From the position of the Third Indiana at that moment, away over the plateau, quite to the mountain, reaches a breastwork not there when our comrades fought, but signaling an incident in the war of the Mexicans against the French.

“You may imagine my feelings when I rode to the position of our second regiment. It was easily identified. A few days after the battle, when the blood of the fallen yet blackened the rocks, I had been along the very line. Looking thence back to where the nearest support was posted, I hardly knew which to do most heartily, curse the inconsiderate confidence of the leader who advanced them to such a position so far in the front, or admire the valor that held the regiment, with two guns, fighting single-handed full one-third of the whole force of the enemy, until ordered irregularly to retreat.

The last time I was on the sacred ground I saw a Mexican working with a hoe on the side of the hill by which we identify the position of the Third Indiana at the turning-point of the battle. My curiosity was excited. I rode to see what he could be doing. A moment ago I said the field was unchanged. I was mistaken. The man was conducting a little stream of water from the mountain miles away to irrigate a wheat-field below the mouth of the very ravine down which the regiments of Hardin, Gell, and McKee had retreated, seeking the cover of Washington's battery—the very ravine where the blood was thickest on the rocks at the end of the fight. I looked down upon the velvet green of the growing stalks, darker from the precious



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

enrichment the soil had that day received, and then at the stream of water which came creeping after the man, like a living plaything. I looked at them, and, understanding the moral of the incident, thanked God for the law that makes war impossible as a lasting condition, however it inspires the loves and memories of comradeship, and teaches that each succeeding generation of freemen are as brave as their ancestors.

"I sat down to excuse myself for not attending the convention; the result is this chapter. If it is too long, I pray pardon.

Very respectfully,

"LEW WALLACE."

In the winter of 1875, under the auspices of James Redpath, General Wallace lectured on "Mexico," a subject with which both his military and literary career had made him thoroughly familiar. Of this especial effort it was said: "The whole lecture seemed less words of description than a series of vivid lifelike pictures, and in every sentence betrayed not less the artist than the cultivated author."

Notwithstanding this friendly verdict, both then and thereafter, he had no liking for the platform. The long journeys, the crowds, the ill-considered demands upon his time, made it irksome to the last degree, and he placed it in the same category to which, long before, he had assigned the profession of the law, which he termed "the most detestable of human occupations."

In 1876, a year crowded with important and varied work, he finished a tragedy entitled "Commodus." It was founded on the story of Maternus, an escaped slave who rebelled against his country, placed himself at the head of a band of outlaws, planned the capture of Rome and his own elevation to the throne. He was finally betrayed and killed by Marcia, his mistress.



## LEW WALLACE

The tragedy was submitted to the late Lawrence Barrett, who wrote to the author:

"You have written the best play since 'Richelieu,'" adding, "Both as a poem and an acting play, 'Commodus' is the best English drama."

Mr. S. R. Crocker, who had been so enthusiastic in his praise of *The Fair God*, did not concur in Mr. Barrett's opinion. While he admitted the fidelity of the picture of court life, with its luxury and extravagance, he pronounced many of the lines lacking in strength, while others were "powerful rather than melodious."

Mr. Crocker's opinion was accepted, and the tragedy was never produced upon the stage. It was published with "The Wooing of Malkatoon," a later poem, by Harper & Brothers, in 1898.

In June, 1876, Rutherford B. Hayes, of Ohio, was nominated for president, with William A. Wheeler, of New York, for vice-president, at the National Republican convention held in Cincinnati. The campaign throughout the country was very exciting, and in the South there was great lawlessness. After the election, as the result of unquestionable fraud, it was found that Mr. Tilden, the Democratic candidate, had received one hundred and eighty-four of the required one hundred and eighty-five electoral votes. President Grant had taken every precaution to secure peace and order in the turbulent southern districts, and, if possible, to enable every voter to cast his ballot without intimidation.

While at his home in Crawfordsville, General Wallace received a letter from the chairman of the state Republican committee informing him that Governor Kellogg, of Louisiana, asked that a number of representative Republicans should attend at New Orleans, and be present at the official count of the returning board for the state,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

He was urged to go, and consented. He remained in New Orleans a few days, and was then invited by Governor Noyes, of Ohio, to go to Tallahassee and witness the count in progress there.

When the board finished its work, he went back to Indiana. Upon reaching home he received a telegram from Senator Chandler asking him to return to Tallahassee as attorney, to attend to certain proceedings which had been instituted in the Florida courts, and the same day one from Mr. Hayes, the president-elect, making a like request.

Upon his arrival in Florida he wrote his wife:

“TALLAHASSEE, *November 26, 1876.*

“This is Sunday, and I will celebrate it with a scrawl to you. We reached here last Monday at 3 P.M., and it seems to me a full month. I scarcely ever passed a week under such depression of spirits; the whole north seems covered by a cloud through which I cannot see—not even a hope of peaceful solution of the political troubles. The feeling that depresses me may and does come from the fact that I have not heard a word from home since I left there. In a great measure, however, I am suffering from that which is the only absolute conclusion gleaned from this visit south, the utter demoralization of the people. It is terrible to see the extent to which all classes go in their determination to win. Conscience offers no restraint. Nothing is so common as the resort to perjury, unless it is violence—in short, I do not know whom to believe. To-morrow the board meets to canvass or count the election returns here. Up to this time both parties have been taking affidavits in preparation for the trial. In this field the Democrats have the advantage. All the lawyers in the state but two are Democrats. Money and intimidation can obtain the oath of white men as well as black to any required statement. A ton of affidavits could be carted into the state-house to-morrow, and not a word of

truth in them, except the names of the parties swearing, and their ages and places of residence. Now what can come from such a state of things? If we win, our methods are subject to impeachment for possible fraud. If the enemy win, it is the same thing exactly—doubt, suspicion, irritation go with the consequence, whatever it may be.

“I have spoken of the moral condition of the states South. You cannot understand it; good people in the North cannot. I do not know what the result of the count to-morrow will be. There are able lawyers in attendance on both sides. The board consists of two Republicans and one Democrat. The latter has already expressed himself, and the counting will be but a form to him; the others are more careful, and up to this time behave with great propriety. I believe they will listen to and be governed by the evidence and give judgment according to the facts. Happily, neither side dared approach them with money. Now you would like to know exactly how the vote stands. I cannot tell you more than that there is a small majority for Hayes upon the returns which have come to hand, with observance of legal forms; upon informal return Tilden has the state. You see, I don’t give figures. This I avoid lest my letter may fall into the hands of a stranger. I await to-morrow with anxiety.

“I would have left this place four days ago, if I could have gone decently. My companion here is Governor Noyes, of Ohio, and it would have been shameful to desert him. We have done our best to restrain our friends, some of whom are moved to carry the end by the means resorted to by the opposition. Up to this time I can say with truth I am not a party to any international wrong, and, further, I don’t mean to be. If the proof shows Tilden entitled to the state, I shall say so.

“Our hotel is called the Warwick House, a pretentious name. The meals are simply wretched; consequently my main reliance to stay the inner man is oranges. On Thursday a Mrs. Egan sent Governor Noyes and myself a bushel of them. The days are simply delicious, while the nights



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

are so cool I take two blankets and a counterpane. The window just behind me is raised, and everybody is abroad. I reserve description till we meet."

On his return home, after the work of the commission was finished, General Wallace gave a clear and unbiassed account of its labors in an interview which appeared in the *Indianapolis Journal*, the truth and fairness of which cannot be questioned:

"It was a matter," he said, "which did not come within the scope of the common law, but had to be referred to a local statute which the State of Florida enacted in 1872. This act created a board of canvassers composed of the secretary of state, the comptroller, and attorney-general, to count the vote of the several counties for presidential electors, governor, and lieutenant-governor, other state officials being appointed by the governor. If it could be shown that there had been no fraud, irregularity, or intimidation in the election, the board were required to certify to the governor the persons elected.

"There was no denial of the jurisdiction of the board," said General Wallace. "The Democratic lawyers in their final argument claimed that the board could not go behind the returns for inquiry; that they had no faith in the position whatever," he continued, "is proved by the fact that in the contest they furnished and filed bushels of exhibits to sustain the charge upon which they relied, all having relation to alleged misconduct on the part of Republican officials. Among other things they made a most determined effort to throw out the returns from the Republican county of Jefferson, on the ground of fraudulent registration and wholesale illegal voting."

Of the politics of the board he said: "The secretary of



state (Mr. McLin), and the comptroller (Dr. Cowgill) were Republicans, while the attorney-general (Mr. Cocke) was a Democrat. On account of his legal experience and ability, it was thought the attorney-general was qualified to detect and check any unfairness on the part of his colleagues. A few days before the meeting of the board, the gentleman had published in a Baltimore paper a statement that the returns showed a majority for Tilden, adding, 'Now let us see if the Radicals'—meaning his two associates—'can cheat us out of the vote.'

"When the board met, the Republican candidates for electors filed a protest against Mr. Cocke, alleging that he had prejudged the case and disqualified himself for canvasser. The protest was overruled by the Republican majority, to the great satisfaction of the Democrats. Then the board began the canvass and count of the returns, with reference exclusively," said General Wallace, "to what appeared upon their face. The result was clear but small majorities for the Republican electors—the lowest was thirty-six, the highest forty. The announcement was received by the Republicans with rejoicing, greatly heightened by the fact (made more conspicuous by the letter referred to) that Mr. Cocke assented to the conclusion. In other words, Governor Hayes, on the face of the returns, was entitled to the vote of Florida; after which it could not be charged that he was counted in by affidavits. It was only possible by affidavits to count him out."

General Wallace said, further:

"At a third meeting of the board business began in earnest. The roll of the counties was called, and when concluded the Republicans had given notice of a contest of every county with a Democratic majority, and

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the Democrats had [done the same] in a like notice against every Republican county.

"It was soon manifest that the Republicans labored under great disadvantages—two in especial. In some counties evidence was obtained by them at peril of life; in others the roads were systematically picketed against their messengers, some of whom were turned back as if they were spies in an enemy's country. In the next place, all the respectable attorneys in the state, except two, were Democrats, and would serve only the opposition. To add to the embarrassment, our leading home counsel took to his bed sick. In the emergency the Republican visitors imitated their Democratic brethren from abroad, and all went in as counsel. From that time things were pushed on both sides. I doubt if in any state or country such a trial was ever witnessed; and yet throughout there was not a discourteous word, while the deportment of the board was the theme of common remark and compliment. I will not attempt to give figures. They will no doubt be published and thoroughly overhauled. The conclusion finally reached and announced by the majority was that Hayes had the state by a true vote of nine hundred and thirty, and that the Republican candidates for governor and lieutenant-governor were elected by smaller votes. Two Republican congressmen were also declared elected.

"One particular," he said, "I must not omit, as it will serve to show the unreliability of certain matter of occurrence subsequent to the decision of the board, from which my Democratic fellow-citizens are deriving consolation and hope. You heard much of resorts had by the Democrats to the courts. Thus a writ of *quo warranto* was served upon the Republican electors, requiring them to appear on the 28th of the month and show cause why they cast the vote of the state for Hayes

instead of Tilden. This point will be disposed of to the satisfaction of every intelligent person by the remark that Attorney-General Cocke, whose duty it was to prosecute the proceedings, refused to have anything to do with it. The Democrats next enjoined the board of canvassers from issuing certificates to the governor and the lieutenant-governor elect. This was of more consequence than the other resort. When the writ was served there was no board; it had performed its duties, and by resolution stood adjourned *sine die*. Moreover, the injunction had reference solely to the state officers, not the presidential electors.

"You ask if it can be impeached by the Congressional committee now in session at Tallahassee. I think not. The absurdity of the attack upon it I can make apparent to every one. Hayes, as has been shown, had forty majority by the count from the face of the returns. The nine hundred and thirty majority was obtained by striking out the returns from certain Democratic counties on account of frauds and illegalities proved. Now, without argument of details, one point will settle the opinion. Among others, the Republicans contested the returns from Jackson, Monroe, and Hamilton counties. In Monroe the Democrats had a majority of three hundred and forty-three returned, in Hamilton their majority was one hundred and sixty-three—making together more than one-half of the nine hundred and thirty. No doubt everybody who has read how Mr. Cocke protested against the action of the board, and how he has since gone the length of giving his certificate of election to the Democratic electors, will be surprised to learn that the returns from the two counties named (Monroe and Hamilton) were struck out by the unanimous vote of the board. That is to say, Mr. Cocke, the Democrat, now the chief objector, actually



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

voted with the Republicans in the motion to strike out those counties, thus increasing Hayes's majority by his action five hundred and six, when without him it would have been but four hundred and twenty-four. So this record of the board convicts him of concurrence in the result, and stops him from making serious trouble except to himself. I explain his conduct in this way: when the board concluded its labors by passing a resolution of adjournment, Mr. Cocke, from the hall of the state-house, was carried into the caucus of his Democratic brethren. When the latter found what he had done, they rose up and gave him a sharp reprimand, to such an effect that he gave in to all they demanded of him, including a shameful protest against his own action as a member of the board, and the farce of issuing certificates to the Tilden electors.

"This is a crude and general statement," said General Wallace, in conclusion, "but it is sufficient to show where the right is, and assure the people that there is nothing to fear from the work in Florida."

It will be recalled that the investigation of the returns in the so-called doubtful states did not end with the report of the commissions. That there might be no remaining suspicion attached to the result, upon the motion of Proctor Knott, of Kentucky, a committee of seven members from the House was appointed to act in concurrence with a similar committee from the Senate. The joint committee met in the House of Representatives, February 1st, where the vote was counted in concurrence with a bill which had been passed to that end.

In cases where there were more returns than one from a state, the true and legal vote was decided by a special committee composed of five members from each House, with five associate justices of the Supreme Court. The



## LEW WALLACE

members of this committee were: George F. Edmunds, Vermont; Oliver P. Morton, Indiana; Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, New Jersey; Thomas F. Bayard, Delaware; Francis Kernan, New York; Henry B. Payne, Ohio; Eppa Hunter, Virginia; Josiah G. Abbott; Massachusetts; James A. Garfield, Ohio; George F. Hoar, Massachusetts; Justices Clifford, Miller, Field, Strong, and Bradley.

The disputed returns were passed upon by this non-partisan commission, which approved and confirmed the count that had been witnessed by General Wallace and his associates. It was officially declared that Hayes and Wheeler were elected. Congress accepting the report of the special committee, which adjourned March 3d.

As might be supposed, the Democrats of Florida had not been disposed to accept the count made by the legally appointed commission, and the state, on its own responsibility, ordered a third. Either in a spirit of bravado, or with intentional impertinence, General Wallace was formally invited to be present at the deliberations of this third and avowedly partisan board. He declined in these terms:

“TALLAHASSEE, *January 19, 1877.*

“*Messrs. Bloxham, Raney, and Drew, Board of State Canvassers :*

“GENTLEMEN,—I am in receipt of a curious paper which informs me that the writer, who signs himself ‘secretary of the board,’ is instructed by the board of state canvassers, convened to canvass the electoral vote of the election held November 7, 1876, in the State of Florida, under the provisions of an ‘Act to be entitled an act to procure a legal canvass of the electoral vote of the State of Florida,’ as cast at the election held on the seventh day of November, A.D. 1876, to notify you (me) that the board

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

will meet at 10 A.M. to-morrow, at the office of the secretary of state, and proceed to canvass said vote.

"I am somewhat at a loss to know the object of the notice. In the first place, the writer does not assure me anywhere in the notice that the board desires me to attend its session or stay away from it.

"In the next place, it addresses me as 'attorney for Hayes's electors.' In a proceeding before Judge White, I am defending four gentlemen who, on December 6th last, as electors for the State of Florida, in formal college assembled, cast the vote of the state for Rutherford B. Hayes for president, and William A. Wheeler for vice-president, after which they ceased to be electors.

"If the object was to invite me to be present at the canvass you are about to make under the act of the present legislature, accept my thanks for the intended courtesy.

"There will be no novelty in the spectacle of the canvass. You will be good enough to remember that within less than two months I have witnessed two canvasses of the returns, one under the (state) law of 1872, the other under the order of the Supreme Court. The only novelty your proceeding could have for me would be that it is a third canvass of the same returns, this time under orders of the legislature.

"If the notice is sent me under an opinion that your canvass may have effect upon the counting of electoral returns from the states, on February 14th next, please accept my disclaimer of part in such opinion. There are good lawyers in both halls of Congress, and if they do not laugh at the act from which you derive authority for your proceeding, it will be because, like myself, they suffer from restraint derived from the respect they must needs have for the law-makers of a great state. I beg you kindly to receive the suggestion that the lawyers of whom I speak all know that there is at least one limitation upon the enacting power of the legislature of every state in the Union. They all know that an act that divests rights, or what assumes to control or exercise judicial powers, is unconsti-

## LEW WALLACE

tutional and void. They all know, too, that a canvass once made and declared by a board is a duty once and forever performed, and that it does not lie in courts or legislatures to revive such boards when once dead, or to order a recanvass by a succeeding body of the same or other sort. It is not going too far, I think, further to remind you that this knowledge is not by any means confined to lawyers in Congress, nor even to lawyers elsewhere; it is a piece of information very generally distributed among the people of the land, who will not fail to apply it in this case.

“If the purpose of the notice was to give me the opportunity to fence public opinion against the effect of your canvass, or the law by virtue of which it is to be, I hope you will take no offence if I respectfully decline to avail myself of the privilege. Public opinion in our country is very practical; it is unpoetic and dispassionate; it subsists on the actual; it breakfasts on facts, dines on facts, sups on facts; it goes through strategies as cannon-balls go through cobwebs. Indeed, if I were to try, I could not fence it around any more than able and learned gentlemen can blind it when disposed to do so.

“If you will allow me to formulate present public opinion upon the subject of the electoral vote of Florida, it is that a final judgment of a competent tribunal, once entered and signed, cannot be altered or reversed by a subsequent enactment of a legislature or direct individual effort.

“With repeated thanks for your intended courtesy, I have the honor to be, very truly,

“Your obliged friend and servant,

“LEW WALLACE.”

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### X

The mission to Bolivia—Martial law in New Mexico—Disturbance quieted—Letter from Mrs. Wallace to Henry L. Wallace—Letters from General Wallace to his wife—The article in the *Youths' Companion*, "How I Came to Write *Ben-Hur*."

AFTER the close of his labors in Tallahassee, General Wallace returned to Crawfordsville and resumed his work on *Ben-Hur*.

The year following (1878) he abandoned the practice of law.

In August he was tendered the mission to Bolivia, concerning which the secretary of state wrote:

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, *August 6, 1878.*

"MY DEAR GENERAL WALLACE,—I am desired by the president to ask you whether you would be willing to undertake the mission to Bolivia, which the last Congress made provision for. The position is that of minister resident and consul general, and the salary is five thousand dollars. I believe the climate is very good. At one time the president supposed you had some inclination to go to South America, but is not certain that it is so now, or that you would like this place.

"Please write the president, as I may be away the greater part of this month.

"I have in mind your good wishes for a speech from me.

"Yours very truly,

"WILLIAM M. EVARTS."

General Wallace wrote, in reply, to President Hayes:



## LEW WALLACE

"CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA, August 12, 1878.

*"To His Excellency, President R. B. Hayes :*

"DEAR SIR,—Secretary Evarts informs me that you have desired him to ask me whether I would be willing to undertake the mission to Bolivia, the position being that of minister resident and consul general, and the salary five thousand dollars. He also requests me to write you directly upon the subject, as he may be away the greater part of the month.

"In reply, frankly speaking, I will not go so far with my family and attempt the duties required for the five thousand dollars. The sum would not enable me fairly to represent our country, and leave me a compensation for two years of life lost.

"I am, nevertheless, sincerely obliged to you for the present offer, and greatly pleased that you have had me so kindly in mind.

"Very truly your friend and servant,

"LEW WALLACE."

In the latter part of August, 1878, General Wallace was appointed governor of New Mexico. The journey at that time was made by rail to Trinidad, Colorado, and thence by buck-board, two days and one night, across the barren plains. Mrs. Wallace, who joined her husband the following year, thus describes Santa Fé as it then appeared:

"The narrow streets are scarcely wide enough for two wagons to pass. The mud walls are high and dark. We reached the open plaza. Long, one-story adobe houses front on every side. And this is the historic city! Older than our government, older than the Spanish conquest; it looks older than the hills surrounding it, and wornout besides. . . .

"I used to think Fernandina was the sleepiest place in the world, but that was before I had seen Santa Fé. The drowsy old town, lying in a sandy valley enclosed on three

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sides by mountain walls, is built of adobe laid in one-story houses, and resembles an extensive brick-yard, with scattered sunburned kilns ready for the fire. The approach in mid-winter, when snow, deep on the mountains, rests in ragged patches on the red soil of New Mexico, is to the last degree disheartening to the traveller entering narrow streets which appear mere lanes. Yet, dirty and unkempt, swarming with hungry dogs, it has the charm of foreign flavor, and, like San Antonio, retains some portion of the grace which lingers about, if indeed it ever forsakes, the spot where Spain has ruled for centuries, and the soft syllables of the Spanish tongue are yet heard.”<sup>1</sup>

Upon his arrival in Santa Fé, General Wallace took up his residence in the old palace, with the territorial offices under the same roof, which Mrs. Wallace has described:

“The archives of the leaky old Palacio del Gobernador hold treasures well worth the seeking of student and antiquary. The building itself has a history full of pathos and stirring incident, as the ancient fort of St. Augustine, and is older than that venerable pile. It had been the palace of the Pueblos immemorially before the holy name, Santa Fé, was given in baptism of blood by the Spanish conquerors; palace of the Mexicans after they broke away from the crown; and palace ever since its occupation by ‘El Gringo.’ In the stormy scenes of the seventeenth century it withstood several sieges; and was repeatedly lost and won, as the white man or the red man held the victory.”<sup>2</sup>

In describing the situation in the territory when he reached Santa Fé, General Wallace said:

“For many years previous to the present time, New Mexico was occupied by hundreds of herders who were

<sup>1</sup> *The Land of the Pueblos*, pp. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 15,

regulated by no especial law, except a common understanding, but who lived in tolerable peace. A rich stock-raiser from Texas came up to New Mexico, and in a short time had three hundred thousand dollars worth of cattle. He settled on the Pecos River, and in a little while had succeeded in driving away almost all the small grazers. To retaliate, they began stealing from him. Now, they do not steal in that country as they do farther east, but they drive off large herds of cattle, sometimes five hundred at a time. To protect himself, the Texan went down into his native state and recruited about seventy men—murderers, thieves, and dangerous men of all classes, together with a number of sharp-shooters and buffalo-hunters. His enemies, seeing these war-like proceedings, banded together in common defence, and the result was open war. When I reached Santa Fé, I found that law was practically a nullity, and had no way of asserting itself. The insurrection seemed to be confined to one county, which, strangely enough, was called Lincoln, and which was as large in area as all New England and a part of New York. I could not possibly have stopped that trouble by civil means, and, accordingly, I was forced to resort to arms. I received the statements of the judges why they dared not hold court in certain districts. The United States marshal told me that he had a large number of warrants which he dared not serve, and could not find deputies rash enough to attempt service, when they knew their lives would pay the penalty. The military commander at Fort Stanton sent a list of the murders that had been committed in his part of the county. I forwarded these combined statements to President Hayes, and asked him to proclaim an insurrection in New Mexico, which he did. That was the only way for me to have the use of the troops for the purposes I desired. I finally had

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

four companies of cavalry for two months, and at the end of that time the desperadoes were driven out of the country, the armed factions were broken up, and the best grazing section of country in the United States was opened to immigrants."

Upon his arrival in the capital, the newly appointed governor was fortunate enough to find there the leaders of the warring factions. He sent for them separately, questioned them, and obtained from each his statement of the feud that had almost depopulated Lincoln County. He learned enough to realize that there was nothing to be gained by pursuing the inquiry, which he therefore abandoned. The facts which he obtained from trustworthy sources induced President Hayes to approve a proclamation of martial law should less severe measures fail. A preliminary proclamation of amnesty to those who had taken part in the insurrection, with the exception of persons indicted for crimes or misdemeanors, or who were undergoing punishment, with the presence of the troops, were all that was necessary. The people returned to their homes, no longer in dread of assassination, confident of protection.

With the support of Americans of the better class, General Wallace received from the Spanish residents the utmost respect. In one instance this was amusingly illustrated. The legislature had prohibited the Sunday festivities permitted under the old Spanish-Mexican rule. The arrival of the governor in one of the small towns, where he could remain but a short time, gave them no choice as to the day for an official reception in his honor. The law was in the way, but, they argued, was he not the head of at least that part of the universe? But how could a reception be held without a *baile*, or ball? This was forbidden on Sunday.



"But it is illegal," General Wallace objected, when the situation was explained.

"Not at all," was the confident reply. "Is not the governor the end of the law? Can he not suspend all law?"

"Very well," he replied, "if I can suspend it, it is suspended; proceed with the *baile*."

Needless to say there was immediate relief on the part of the committee. Guitars were brought, and Father Felician smiled on the gay fandango.

In his message to the territorial legislature, January 5, 1880, General Wallace made many practical suggestions: better provisions for the public schools and the enforced teaching of English; a resurvey of disputed boundary-lines; a careful revision of the laws, notably the criminal code.

The Indians were becoming troublesome, especially the Apaches, of whom he said: "Kindness makes no impression upon them. They are what they were when the Spaniard found them—cunning, blood-thirsty, untamable."

There had been many atrocities, and the governor, scouting the sentimentalism of Eastern philanthropists who urged peaceful methods in dealing with the savages, advised the territorial assembly to aid the people in defending themselves. This body had expressed willingness to raise, arm, and equip one thousand militia, and in addition General Wallace wrote to Carl Schurz, secretary of the interior, asking that more United States troops be sent to New Mexico.

"The necessity is very great," he urged. "The Comanches are in the Guadalupe Mountains, southeast. The Mescaleros on the Stanton reservation are about to break Guadalupe. Victorio's bands are already loose in Grant County. Life and property are in imminent peril."

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

To this Mr. Schurz replied:

*“General Lew Wallace, Governor of New Mexico :*

“Upon submitting your telegram of the 16th to the War Department, the following answer was received: ‘Hon. Carl Schurz, Secretary of the Interior: Upon the subject of your telegram, the general of the army (Sherman) informs me that no more regular troops can be spared for New Mexico without abandoning other parts of the country exposed to similar and greater danger. The law confers upon the president and secretary of war no power to accept for the service of the United States any more troops than such as compose the regular army. If the territory of New Mexico calls a thousand men for defence of her scattered settlements, the governor should be notified that the territory must pay and provide for them. It is stated that the necessity for troops has not been reported by General Hatch, who is on the spot, and that the dangers reported by Governor Lew Wallace are greatly exaggerated. The Comanches are in the custody of an authorized agent in the Indian Territory, more than a thousand miles from the Guadalupe Mountains of south New Mexico. The only Indians there are the nomadic Apaches fleeing from Major Morrow’s command. The Mescaleros are on the Fort Stanton reservation, few in number, and not enough to call for the extraordinary measures contemplated by the New Mexico legislature.

“ALEX. RAMSEY, Secretary of War.’

“(Signed) CARL SCHURZ.”

To this General Wallace replied:

“SANTA FÉ, January 19, 1880.

*“Hon. C. Schurz, Washington:*

“Answering yours of the 17th instant, I have nothing to say about remarks personal to myself therein, except that all my assertions in telegram of 16th instant rest upon letters from reliable citizens and information from

## LEW WALLACE

General Hatch, with whom I conferred just previous to telegraphing. Unless you otherwise direct, I will to-morrow submit the answer of the secretary of war declining to send more regulars to New Mexico, and state that it is the ultimatum of the general government on that point, and that I will hasten preparations to execute the law just passed giving me men and money for defence against the Indians. As to the Comanches being more than a thousand miles from the Guadalupe Mountains of south New Mexico, people in Alabama will be astonished to hear that they have such an addition to their population.

“LEW WALLACE, Governor of New Mexico.”

But even this last proposal was opposed by Mr. Schurz. His reply to General Wallace was as follows:

“WASHINGTON, *January 22d.*

“*Governor Lew Wallace :*

“Your despatch of the 19th has been considered, and it is thought that the employment of citizen volunteers against Indians should be resorted to only in extreme necessity, which information so far received from military officers does not show.

C. SCHURZ.”

The arbitrary decision of the authorities in Washington speedily became known to the hostile Indians, and the condition that followed was described by General Wallace in an interview, while on his way to Washington the following March to confer personally with the president. He said:

“I suppose very few people in the East know that there is an Indian war now in progress in New Mexico, but such is the fact. Last year an Apache chief, Victorio, a man seventy-five years old, became hostile and took to the war-path. In some respects,” he explained, “he is a wonderful man, and, commencing with a band of seventy-five warriors, he succeeded in uniting tribes

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

always hostile to one another before, and in a few weeks he had three hundred well-armed followers. He has held his own against us from that day to this, in open conflict, and he has murdered about one hundred men, women, and children in the most horrible manner. He is an enemy not to be despised."

When asked if he had not sufficient troops to crush Victorio, General Wallace replied: "That is just the trouble. The few men that I have can only check, but cannot crush him. Our officers and soldiers have displayed the utmost gallantry under the most discouraging circumstances."

Before the Indians were finally subdued over four hundred persons perished. Among them were Judge McComas, a warm personal friend of General Wallace, and his family, whose dead bodies were found, after surprise and butchery, lying in the road. Long afterwards General Wallace related an incident of this period of his administration.

"I set out from Santa Fé," he said, "to investigate difficulties in a remote region of the territory. I went in an ambulance, then the usual mode of travel, with a strong guard armed with Winchester rifles. After a few hours, Indians began to appear in the distance. My men held up their Winchesters, and the savages were careful not to approach within range. When we reached the town the people came out and greeted us with amazement; had we been newly raised from the dead, they could not have shown greater awe. We presently learned the cause. After returning the salutations of the officials, we followed them to the church. There was the explanation. Before the altar were sixteen corpses, men, women, and children, some of them shockingly mutilated. The head of one little child had been crushed to pieces by beating it over the wheel of



a wagon. In view of all this butchery, it is no wonder that they considered our escape little short of a miracle."

In her private letters Mrs. Wallace has accounts of life in the new territory which give a definite idea of the conditions which the governor encountered, as is shown in the following, selected at random:

"FORT STANTON, NEW MEXICO, *May 11, 1879.*

"*Susan E. Wallace to Henry L. Wallace:*

"MY DEAR, — General Sherman was right. We should have another war with Old Mexico to make her take back New Mexico. I did not think anything could make me think well of Sante Fé, but this hideous spot does.

"We are at the post-trader's, and I am the only feminine creature except an old hen. The cook who fries the bacon is a Mexican giant with long, straggling black hair, and when not frying he stands in the Colossus of Rhodes pose and gazes at us. They sent miles away for a chicken, and when brought and fried by the giant, I could not manage the famished thing—all bone and fibre. I remarked to General H. (commandant), this country was not made for civilized men. He replied, 'I have held that opinion a long while.' It should be a buffalo-range for the Indian, who can find the springs curiously hidden on the tops of mountains.

"A horrible dust-storm is blowing gravel against the window, beating it like hail. I taste the alkali dust; my clothes are gritty, and the last box in the bottom of my trunk is grimy with sand. Yet I have heard of this as the garden spot of the territory. Garden! There has been no rain in six months, and what can grow in soil made of fire-clay, alkali, and sand? I have some faith in mines, because nothing is made in vain, and there is nothing else here. Saying this to Mrs. D., she triumphantly asked, 'What is the desert of Sahara made for?'

"We journeyed across a plain lying in the midst of a stone wilderness; in every direction mountains grim and fixed as walls of adamant, seeming immovable as the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

throne of God. 'No water, 'the eye of the earth' glancing up towards heaven; no waving branches beckoning like friendly hands to shade and shelter; no wagon-road or foot-path to mark the track of men; no bee or bird, not even a grasshopper's chirp. The earth was still as the sky before the winds were made.

"The Lincoln County reign of terror is not over, and we hold our lives at the mercy of desperadoes and outlaws, chief among them 'Billy the Kid,' whose boast is that he has killed a man for every year of his life. Once he was captured, and escaped after overpowering his guard, and now he swears when he has killed the sheriff and the judge who passed sentence upon him, and Governor Wallace, he will surrender and be hanged. 'I mean to ride into the plaza at Sante Fé, hitch my horse in front of the palace, and put a bullet through Lew Wallace.'

"These are his words.

"One of my friends warned me to close the shutters at evening, so the bright light of the student's-lamp might not make such a shining mark of the governor writing till late on *Ben-Hur*. 'Billy' (whose name is Bonney) has a gang of admirers and followers, and they dash up to a ballroom, shoot out the candles, and gallop away and nobody hurt.

"This way of living does not suit me; some men find an unaccountable fascination in the danger and outlawry of the frontier far beyond my understanding. Sweet home was never sweeter to my thought than now in this wilderness without the manna.

"When the manuscript is ready we will go to New York with it, and how glad I should be to think there will be no return to the 'most desirable of all the territories'—a phrase continually sounded in our ears."

Letters from General Wallace to Susan E. Wallace, after her return to Crawfordsville, November, 1879:

"I am well; how one can be anything else in this climate I do not know. The air is so clear and pure, the

sunlight so delicious; no fear of cloudy to-morrows; when one dies away another as bright and as shining comes on. I wish you could fill your lungs with this sweet air. Last week I spent three days among the old Spanish mines. You know I have always had a great admiration for the old Spaniards who came with and followed Cortés. Leaving their battle-fields, to learn the full extent of their daring and force, one must come to these records. . . . And yet they but bored gimlet-holes in the mountain. We are trying to get titles to the mines, subject to such conditions as will give us time and enable us to work them. . . .

"To my surprise my message has given satisfaction. I had a mixed audience of ladies and gentlemen, and when I had finished reading, and the paper was interpreted—a wretched performance by-the-way—I received what I never heard of before during the delivery of a message—applause. Think of that!

"I am busy putting in every spare minute copying my book for publication. It is curious this jumping from the serious things of life to the purely romantic. It is like nothing so much as living two lives in one. To pass from a meeting of the Wise Men in the Desert, to effecting a reconciliation in a legislature and breaking a deadlock, are certainly wide enough apart. The latter I did within an hour after I took hold of it, and so effectually that Democrats voted for Republicans and Republicans for Democrats. They are now at peace. How long will it last?"

"SANTA FÉ, December 4, 1879.

"I came in last night sound and well; the journey across the *fornada* was dangerous, and possible attack from Indians necessitated hands on rifles and pistols all the way, and pockets full of cartridges, which grew heavy before night came on. We saw smoke-signals of Victorio's band high up the mountain-tops, and, as we were without escort, there was some excitement among us.

"I note your criticisms of the march to Golgotha, and am of the opinion that they are all just. Some of them I



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

had in mind with intentions to correct them. From this time on I shall have more time for you and my book, and shall be supremely happy when the work is done. When it is complete, and a few other things are finished, I don't see much left that is worth the care and toil of this world; besides which I confess to a reverent curiosity to see what there is in the next one.

"One day I wrote from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. I have so many and all sorts of interruptions in this land of ample leisure. I am trying to do four things: First, manage a legislature of most jealous elements; second, take care of an Indian war; third, finish a book; fourth, sell some mines.

"Can you fancy a greater diversity of occupation? There are sometimes a dozen men at the same time waiting turns. I must see them all, and, what is worse, hear them through. There is no escape, not even in the night. Last night, for instance, four men were with me till one o'clock. The first upon railroads; the second upon Apaches; the third and fourth upon mines. So runs my time away, and *Ben-Hur* is unfinished. I began writing at nine-thirty to-night. If I could have a few months to myself I could soon finish the copying for the press. I will copy yet, to-night, six pages.

"A poet of the Sierras (not Miller) called yesterday and asked me, confidentially, if my wife had not helped me in writing *The Fair God* and my new book. I told him yes—that I never put away a chapter as finished without first reading it to you to get your criticism. In many instances I had great help in that way. He came in evidently thinking you were joint author. The poor little verses in *Ben-Hur* will be credited to you; of that I feel certain; yet if you can stand the imputation I can.

"My time is so broken I can only snatch a little mornings, if any, before night.

“(Later).”

"I have given thought to your point—that there is nothing in my last chapters to relieve the meekness with which Christ went to the cross. The point is correct as an



observation, but not as a criticism, since that was exactly what I sought to give in the description. My idea is that at a certain time—viz, when Christ arose from the table to go to Gethsemane, his spirit had not yet been brought to the condition in which he could go meekly to death; a little later—viz, after the struggle in Gethsemane, his mind, to use a common expression, was made up, and after that he delivered himself to his captors, prepared for death. In the apostolic account there is not a word, nor an act, nor a gesture, indicative of any resentment, defiance, or impulse of resistance; on the contrary, when Peter cut off the servant's ear, he not only rebuked the disciple, but restored the ear whole. Go now and read the several accounts of the four apostles, descriptive of the capture, the trial, the march to Golgotha, and the dying upon the cross, and every exemplification is that of absolute submission, which, with the prayer, 'Father forgive them,' etc., uttered the moment the tree dropped into the hole ready for it, marks the difference between the *divine* Christ and the *common* man. To me the conduct of the sufferer in the very particular of which you speak is the most conclusive proof of His divine nature, and—think of this!—it was not possible by words or acts to show more plainly His strength, derived from knowledge of what He was, than by the meekness with which He endured and died—no flashing of the eyes, no pointing towards heaven, no threat of what He could do if He was so disposed, no boast of His divinity could have served that purpose so well. He was the 'Lamb of God' at no time in His career so completely and purely as in the agony of His last hours. So I mean to stand by the description exactly as you have it, so far as this point is concerned.

"When I reach the words '*The End*,' how beautiful they will look to me! What a long, long work it has been, a labor of love! How many hours and days and weeks it has consumed! Frightful to think of; and yet I know no happier way of passing time, none which takes me so completely out of this world and affairs of the present, a per-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

fect retreat from the annoyances of daily life as they are spun for me by enemies, and friends who might as well be enemies.

"Colonel Church asked leave to read the sheets on my table. He started in at once, and read all night. A high compliment. There will be errors in it, because I cannot be in the office to read the proof.

"I wonder how many average readers will see in 'How the Beautiful Came to the Earth' my view of the woman question, and how many meanings there are known only to the writer and his wife. . . .

"How would you like to go to The Hague? Take down the atlas, and spy out the land which literally lies under the sea, the land of William the Silent, of cheese and canals and fat burgomasters, the land with a history of heroism, for such was its rise of free cities and its sixty years contest with the Spaniards, a monarchy under the cloak of republicanism. The pay is insufficient, but the life there would be better than this, and we could be together again.

"Would you go to Brazil with me? <sup>1</sup> I am tired of this place, and the territorial climate is too severe for you. Many invalids find health here. If not friendly, it is very unfriendly to the new-comer.

"This is Sunday. The band is playing to the usual motley crowd — whites, blacks, Mexicans, Indians, men, women, children; men on horseback, families, friends, and lovers in carriages. I wish my successor, whoever he be, was come. Of course he will do just as I did, have the same ideas, make the same attempts, and with the same heartiness of effort, soon cool in zeal, then finally say, 'All right, let her drift.' Every calculation based on experience elsewhere fails in New Mexico.

"In six years more I shall be sixty. I have spent enough time in this place. You do not care to try Bolivia

<sup>1</sup> This mission was also offered General Wallace by President Hayes and declined.

nor do I—the only thing to take me there would be hope of making enough to free me of the law forever. I want a study, a pleasure-house for my soul, where no one could hear me make speeches to myself, and play the violin at midnight if I chose. A detached room away from the world and its worries. A place for my old age to rest in and grow reminiscent, fighting the battles of youth over again.”

General Wallace has given this detailed account of the writing of *Ben-Hur*:

“‘How came I to write *Ben-Hur*?’

“The question has been put to me so often, and in the same form, that the world shall have an answer; although I confess it not a little difficult, seeing the different aims the interrogation may take.

“The very beginning of the book lies in a quotation from St. Matthew:

“‘Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him.’

“Far back as my memory goes of things read by or to me, those lines took a hold on my imagination beyond every other passage of Scripture. How simple they are! But analyze them, and behold the points of wonder!

“The saying that they came from the east is altogether unsatisfactory. How many were they? And oh, the star! the star!

“It was a speaking star, for we are left to infer it told them a king was born to the Jews, and that they must go find and worship Him; and when, doubtless, they asked where He was, they were bid follow it, for it was the King’s star. So, too, it could not have been set in the heavens, else it could not have led them; for one



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

may go round the globe, and up and down from pole to pole, without ever getting under the far pin-point of light called the north star.

“Then when, after months and possibly years of journey to and fro, on ship or horse or camel, bearing presents of value—they could not have walked—how did they know their journey at last finished?

“And when they entered a cave near an obscure hamlet, Bethlehem by name, and beheld a speechless baby in swaddling-clothes, and nowise different in appearance from other babies, who told them it was He they were seeking? What, a king in a stable-manger!

“But they did not laugh; they stopped there and worshipped the little boy, and gave Him their gifts. Was the mother astonished, or was she looking for them?

“In 1875—the date is given from best recollection—when I was getting over the restlessness due to years of service in the War of the Rebellion, it occurred to me to write the conceptions which I had long carried in my mind of the Wise Men. A serial upon the subject would admit of any number of illustrations, and might be acceptable to one of the magazines.

“So I wrote, commencing with the meeting in the desert, numbering and naming the three upon the authority of the dear old tradition-monger, Father Bede, and ending with the birth of the Child in the cave by Bethlehem.

“At that time, speaking candidly, I was not in the least influenced by religious sentiment. I had no convictions about God or Christ. I neither believed nor disbelieved in them.

“The preachers had made no impression upon me. My reading covered nearly every other subject. Indifference is the word most perfectly descriptive of my feelings respecting the To-morrow of Death, as a French



## LEW WALLACE

scientist has happily termed the succession of life. Yet when the work was fairly begun, I found myself writing reverentially, and frequently with awe.

"This was purely natural; for it is with me, presumably, as with every writer who creates as he goes. My characters are essentially living persons. They arise and sit, look, talk, and behave like themselves.

"In dealing with them I see them; when they speak I hear them. I know them by their features. They answer my call. Some of them I detest. Such as I most affect become my familiars. In turn they call me, and I recognize their voices. Such being the case, think of the society to which the serial directly admitted me!

"Think of riding with Balthasar on his great white camel to the meeting appointed beyond Moab; of association with the mysterious Three; of breaking fast with them in the shade of the little tent pitched on the rippled sand; of hearing the 'grace' with which they began their repast; of listening as they introduced themselves to one another, telling how and when and where they were severally summoned by the Spirit; of the further guestship in the final journey to Jerusalem, the star our guide!

"Think of attending a session of the Sanhedrim; of hearing Herod the Builder ask Hillel, more than a hundred years a scholar, where the new King of the Jews was most likely to be discovered!

"Think of lying with the shepherds in their sheepfold that clear, crisp, first Christmas night; of seeing the ladder of light drop out of the window of heaven; of hearing the Annunciator make proclamation of his glad tidings!

"Think of walking with Joseph from the Joppa gate across the plain of Rephaim, past the tomb of Rachel, up to the old khan by Bethlehem; of stealing glances at

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the face of the girl-wife on the donkey, she who was so shortly to be, in good old Catholic phrase, the Blessed Mother of God!

"Think of seeing that face so often and with such distinctness as to be able to pronounce that there are but ~~two~~ portraits of her in the world, Raphael's and Murillo's, all the others being either too old, too vulgar, or too human! Then tell me, was it strange if I wrote reverentially, and sometimes with awe? Or that I was unconsciously making ready to cast my indifference as a locust casts its shell?

"Well, I finished the proposed serial and deposited it in my desk, waiting for a season of courage in which to open communication with the Harpers.

"In the time of writing, down to the hour I laid the manuscript by, as said, never once did the possibility of a formal book occur to me.

"If any reader before whom this confession may chance to fall will return to the volume now known as *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, and examine critically the commencement of the part designated Book Second, he cannot fail to be struck with its similitudes to the opening of a novel. Such, in fact, it was.

"It is possible to fix the hour and place of the first thought of a book precisely enough; that was a night in 1876. I had been listening to discussion which involved such elemental points as God, heaven, life hereafter, Jesus Christ, and His divinity. Trudging on in the dark, alone except as one's thoughts may be company good or bad, a sense of the importance of the theme struck me for the first time with a force both singular and persistent.

"My ignorance of it was painfully a spot of deeper darkness in the darkness. I was ashamed of myself, and make haste now to declare that the mortification

of pride I then endured, or, if it be preferred, the punishment of spirit, ended in a resolution to study the whole matter, if only for the gratification there might be in having convictions of one kind or another.

"Forthwith a number of practical suggestions assailed me: How should I conduct the study? Delve into theology? I shuddered. The theology of the professors had always seemed to me an indefinitely deep pit filled with the bones of unprofitable speculations.

"There were the sermons and commentaries. The very thought of them overwhelmed me with an idea of the shortness of life. No; I would read the Bible and the four gospels, and rely on myself. A lawyer of fifteen or twenty years of practice attains a confidence peculiar in its mental muscularity, so to speak.

"Next the subject was considered dry. Was there no way of making it the least bit light and savory? No incidental employment or task which would give it a color of pastime, and, while compelling thorough investigation, keep me interested? Then it came!

"The manuscript in my desk ended with the birth of Christ; why not make it the first book of a volume, and go on to His death? I halted—there was a light in my mind! And it brought the difficulties—a host of them—to the surface.

"One ought never to speak except he sees his opening and conclusion; the intermediate will take care of itself—so a successful after-dinner orator is reported to have said. The remark applies well to addresses; but I doubt its wisdom in the matter of book-making. Here in the very outset the intermediate presented itself a Giant Despair.

"I had my opening; it was the birth of Christ. Could anything be more beautiful? As a mere story, the imagination of man has conceived nothing more crowded



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

with poetry, mystery, and incidents pathetic and sublime, nothing sweeter with human interest, nothing so nearly a revelation of God in person. So, too, I saw a fitting conclusion.

"Viewed purely and professionally as a climax or catastrophe to be written up to, the final scene of the last act of a tragedy or a tale, what could be more stupendous than the Crucifixion?

"But the unities are inexorable. Because they run through every life they must be observed. And here in this story there was a lapse of eighteen or twenty years—being the interval between the remarkable appearance of the Holy Child in the Temple, what time He came up to the Passover, and His reappearance a man with a mission.

"The Days of Ignorance of the Arabs, when there was no history, were not denser with a want of knowledge than that interval. What was I to do with it? Now it seemed a gulf in my way; now an Illimani high as the sky.

"I scarcely dare tell of my travail; but after weeks of reflection, at last I decided to use the blank to show the religious and political condition of the world at the time of the coming. Perhaps those conditions would demonstrate a necessity for a Saviour.

"Having weathered this point, I passed on to the constituents of the tale. There was no lack of incident, none of persons; only, I was hampered in the selection by the requirement to discard all which did not serve the conditions mentioned.

"Rome furnished the politics, and made the evolution of Messala easy. Save the few pearls of faith glistening on the marble steps of the Gate Beautiful in the Herodian Temple at Jerusalem, there was nowhere a suggestion of religion; out of that circumstance I wrought Ben-Hur,



his mother and sister, Simonides and Esther—naming the latter after my own dear mother, departed long ago in the fairness of her youth.

“The commitment to the galley, the sea-fight, the chariot-race and its preceding orgies were Roman phases; just as the love marking the Hur family, the steady pursuit of vengeance by the son, and his easy conversion by Simonides to the alluring idea of the Messiah a ruler like Cæsar, were Jewish.

“The derivation of what may be termed the Christian incidents is apparent. Wanting to convey a commensurate conception of the awful power underlying a miracle, I struck the mother and sister of my hero with leprosy. It was cruel, but essential. Finally, wanting a connecting thread for the whole story, but more particularly for the two periods so wide apart—that given to Christ the Child, and that given to Christ the Saviour—I kept Balthasar alive to the end.

“In the next place, I had never been to the Holy Land. In making it the location of my story, it was needful not merely to be familiar with its history and geography, I must be able to paint it, water, land, and sky, in actual colors. Nor would the critics excuse me for mistakes in the costumes or customs of any of the peoples representatively introduced, Greek, Roman, Egyptian, especially the children of Israel.

“Ponder the task! There was but one method open to me. I examined catalogues of books and maps, and sent for everything likely to be useful. I wrote with a chart always before my eyes—a German publication, showing the towns and villages, all sacred places, the heights, the depressions, the passes, trails, and distances.

“Travellers told me of the birds, animals, vegetation, and seasons. Indeed, I think the necessity for constant

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

reference to authorities saved me mistakes which certainly would have occurred had I trusted to a tourist's memory.

"But the greatest of the difficulties! Veterans in the fine art of story-telling are likely to say off-hand it was either the invention of incidents or the choice of characters. No, no!

"The Christian world would not tolerate a novel with Jesus Christ its hero, and I knew it. Nevertheless, writing of Him was imperative, and He must appear, speak, and act. Further, and worse as a tribulation, I was required to keep Him before the reader, the object of superior interest throughout.

"And there was to be no sermonizing. How could this be done without giving mortal offence? How, and leave the book a shred of popularity? It does not become me to intimate any measure of success in the accomplishment; yet I may be pardoned for an outright confession of the rules I prescribed for my government in the dilemma.

"First, I determined to withhold the reappearance of the Saviour until the very last hours. Meantime, He should be always coming—to-day I would have Him, as it were, just over the hill yonder; to-morrow He will be here, and then—to-morrow. To bring Balthasar up from Egypt, and have him preaching the Spiritual Kingdom, protesting the Master alive because His mission, which was founding the kingdom, was as yet unfulfilled, and looking for Him tearfully, and with an infinite yearning, might be an effective expedient.

"Next, He should not be present as an actor in any scene of my creation. The giving a cup of water to Ben-Hur at the well near Nazareth is the only violation of this rule.

"Finally, when He was come, I would be religiously

careful that every word He uttered should be a literal quotation from one of His sainted biographers.

"Of the more than seven years given the book, the least part was occupied in actual composition. Research and investigation consumed most of the appropriated time.

"I had to be so painstaking! The subject was the one known thoroughly by more scholars and thinkers than any other in the wide range of literature.

"After comparing authorities, I had frequently to reconcile them; failing in that, it remained to choose between them. There is nothing, not even a will-o'-the-wisp, so elusive as a disputed date. Once I went to Washington, thence to Boston, for no purpose but to exhaust their libraries in an effort to satisfy myself of the mechanical arrangement of the oars in the interior of a trireme.

"Nor must it be supposed I wrote day after day continuously. I wanted to; but through the whole period I was a bread-winner. Consequently my book-making hours were such as I could snatch from professional employment.

"Sometimes Ben-Hur or Simonides or Balthasar or Sheik Ilderim the Generous would call me imperiously; and there being no other means of pacifying them, I would play truant from court and clients. There are numberless paragraphs in the volume recognizable as having been blocked out on the cars 'between cities' or in the waits at lonesome stations.

"Thus Tirzah's little song, 'Wake Not, but Hear Me, Love,' is the resultant of a delayed passage from Indianapolis home. A man can carry his mind with him as he carries his watch; but like the watch, to keep it going he must keep it wound up.

Of course most of the writing was done at Crawfords-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ville, with night as the favoring time. Of summer days, business permitting, the preferred spot was beneath a beech-tree, one of many kings of its kind airing their majesties around our homestead. Its spreading branches droop to the ground, weighed down by their wealth of foliage, and under them I am shut in as by the walls of a towering green tent.

"How often, while lending me its protection and fragrant coolness, it has been the sole witness of my struggle to whip an obstinate thought into comeliness of expression; and how often, out of respect for me, it has maintained a dignified silence when it might have laughed at my discomfiture.

"I am under the great gray arms of the same tree at this present writing. The hum of singing things imparts life to the silence; the sunlight freckles the sward, the birds hunt their prey almost to my feet, all as when I wandered with Ben-Hur through the Grove of Daphne.

"Everybody has heard of the old palace in Santa Fé, New Mexico. A rambling, one-story adobe structure, with walls in places six feet thick, and hard as friable stone, it covers the whole of the north side of the plaza.

"Authentic history connects it with the occupation of the Cibolan region by the Spaniards; while traditionally every room in it is the habitat of ghosts more or less numerous, of which some are said to mutter their tales of woe in the vernacular of the Pueblos, some in the liquid Castilian of Isabella, some in what a lively French ambassadress, wishing to flatter me, once called American English.

"The second door from the west end plaza front opens into a spacious passage; and does one seek a conference with his excellency, the governor of the territory, he must knock at the first left-hand door in the passage.



Back of the executive office is an extensive room provided with a small window and one interior entrance.

"The walls were grimy, the undressed boards of the floor rested flat upon the ground; the cedar rafters, rain-stained as those in the dining-hall of Cedric the Saxon, and overweighted by tons and tons of mud composing the roof, had the threatening downward curvature of a shipmate's cutlass. Nevertheless, in that cavernous chamber I wrote the eighth and last book of *Ben-Hur*.

"My custom when night came was to lock the doors and bolt the windows of the office proper, and with a student's-lamp, bury myself in the four soundless walls of the forbidding annex. Once there, at my rough pine table, the Count of Monte Cristo in his dungeon of stone was not more lost to the world.

"The ghosts, if they were ever about, did not disturb me; yet in the hush of that gloomy harborage I beheld the Crucifixion, and strove to write what I beheld.

"The name Ben-Hur was chosen because it is Biblical, and easily spelled, printed, and pronounced.

"As this article is in the nature of confessions, here is one which the reader may excuse, and at the same time accept as a fitting conclusion: Long before I was through with my book, I became a believer in God and Christ."<sup>1</sup>

Some years after his residence in Constantinople, General Wallace wrote:

"One of the advantages of my position was that it gave me an opportunity to visit Jerusalem and Judea, under the most favorable circumstances possible. Every door was thrown open, and every place of interest exhibited to the fullest extent possible by the authority of the sultan. Only four persons who were Christians had preceded me in being allowed inside the old mosque at Hebron, and

<sup>1</sup> "How I Came to Write *Ben-Hur*," by Lew Wallace, in *The Youths' Companion*, February 2, 1893.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

they were the Prince of Wales and his two sons, and the present Emperor of Austria. I was permitted to pass through every part of that place of wonderful historic interest, except the Cave of Machpelah, which is entirely closed up, and at this point, as well as during my entire journey throughout Judea, I had every opportunity of testing the accuracy of the descriptions given in *Ben-Hur*. I started on foot from Bethany, proceeding over the exact route followed by my hero, walked to Mount Olivet, saw the rock at which the mother and sister waited for Christ to come and heal them of their leprosy. Then I went to the top of Olivet and saw the identical stone, as I thought, upon which my hero sat when he returned from the galley life. I went down into the old Valley of Kedron, and from the old well of Enrogel looked over the valley, and every feature of the scene appeared identical with the description of that which the hero of the story looked upon. At every point of the journey over which I traced his steps to Jerusalem, I found the descriptive details true to the existing objects and scenes, and I find no reason for making a single change in the text of the book."

## LEW WALLACE

### XI

The manuscript of *Ben-Hur* — Letter from Garfield — The sales—  
Translations—Forgeries—Mahan—Library of St. Sophia.

WHEN it was finally finished, General Wallace, accompanied by his wife, went to New York, where the manuscript of *Ben-Hur* was offered to Messrs. Harper & Brothers. After the arrangements had been made, which involves some delay, they published the book, November 12, 1880.

It was written in purple ink with fastidious care, every sentence wrought to the most perfect finish of which the author was capable. When Mr. Joseph Harper opened it, he said:

"This is the most beautiful manuscript that has ever come into this house. A bold experiment to make Christ a hero that has been often tried and always failed."

It was probably the last book read by President Garfield, and he sent the author the letter reproduced here:

General Wallace's commission as minister resident of the United States to Turkey was dated, "at the city of Washington, the nineteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-one, and of the independence of the United States of America the one hundred and fifth." Across the left-hand corner is written *Ben-Hur*.

Mr. Harper believed that the book obtained for its writer his appointment to Constantinople.

"I called on Garfield one evening," he said, "and he

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

EXECUTIVE MANSION

WASHINGTON

April 19/81

Dear General

I have, this morning, finished reading "Ben-Hur" - and I must thank you for the pleasure it has given me -

The theme was difficult; but you have handled it with great delicacy and power.

Several of the scenes



Such as the wise  
men in the desert-  
the Sea fight; - the  
Chariot race - will  
I am sure take a  
permanent and high  
place in literature

With this beautiful  
and reverent book  
you have lightened  
the burden of my  
daily life and re-  
newed our acquaint-  
ance which began  
at Shiloh -  
Very Truly Yours  
J. R. Garfield

For Lew Wallace  
Smith & Co. N.Y.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

came into the room with his finger between the pages, and asked:

“‘Do you know anything about the composition of this book?’

“‘I think I do,’ I replied.

“‘Well,’ said Garfield, ‘it has made a good impression on me. I offered Wallace a place in South America which he would not take. I think I will send him to Turkey in the place made vacant by Horace Maynard’s death. *Ben-Hur* indicates that he can improve his opportunities in the East.’”

Mr. Harper remarked, in conclusion, “My observation of Garfield was that he liked to make appointments of his own suggestion.”

For the first year of its existence the book showed no signs of its future popularity, nor did its sale improve much in the second year. Then it began to grow steadily, until now (1905) the sales are as great as ever.

It has never been issued in cheap form, fourteen different editions [and innumerable printings] having been published from time to time. It has been translated into German, French, Swedish, Bohemian, Turkish, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Arabic, and has been printed in raised characters for the blind.

The Arabic translation was made by Rev. Cornelius V. A. Van Dyke, who lived in Syria fifty years, senior representative of the American Board of Foreign Missions, and who was acknowledged to be the greatest Arabic scholar in the world.

The first Italian translation, published in Modena in 1895, was made, with the sanction of the Church, by Alfonso Maria Galea.

A second appeared later, by Professor Henry Salvadori, honorary chaplain to his holiness Pope Leo XIII., introducing “various modifications of ideas into

the work in the interests of piety." Professor Salvadori received the blessing of the pope as a recognition of his work.

The success of *Ben-Hur* encouraged several bold plagiarists in their effort to take to themselves at least a portion of the honors which it achieved for its author. In February, 1891, a friend wrote to General Wallace from Denver:

"A short time ago a gentleman, Colonel B., from Montana, I believe, was visiting in this city. During a conversation with a friend of mine, he is reported to have made the assertion that he was an intimate friend of yours, and that he wrote the story of 'The Roman Chariot-Race' in *Ben-Hur*. I told my friend that I did not credit the statement fully, and would write to you for confirmation or denial. Your answer is awaited with considerable interest by several of Colonel B.'s friends here, as well as by myself."

The denial asked for was promptly furnished, and nothing more was heard of the claim of Colonel B., of the United States army.

The most important and daring pretension, however, was that of Rev. W. D. Mahan, a Presbyterian clergyman, of Booneville, Missouri, who incorporated the story of "The three Magi" in a book which bore his name on the title-page and was published at the author's expense.

He professed to have found the story in a Hebrew manuscript, which he discovered in the library of the Mosque of St. Sophia, in Constantinople.

As his book did not appear until 1884, four years after the publication of *Ben-Hur*, his statement was at once questioned.

The attention of General Wallace was called to the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

matter, and charges of fraud were brought against Mr. Mahan by his presbytery. In order to collect evidence for the formal trial that followed, certain questions were transmitted to General Wallace, who was then in Turkey. The substance of his reply, which was qualified, as requested, before a notary public, was as follows:

"The book *Ben-Hur* was not in whole or part founded upon a European translation of any such manuscript into European or other language. Previous to the writing and publication of *Ben-Hur* I had neither read, seen, nor heard of any manuscript Hebrew story found in Constantinople or elsewhere."

General Wallace said, further, that he knew nothing of the visit of Rev. W. D. Mahan to Constantinople in 1883, and that he had not given him permission to publish in his book that portion of *Ben-Hur* which relates to "The three Magi." No one attached to the United States legation in October, 1883, had any knowledge of the visit of Rev. Mr. Mahan; nor could any of the American missionaries in and about Constantinople, to whom General Wallace had spoken, recall at any time such a visitor to the capital, although few clergymen, especially those conducting such a research, seldom stopped in Constantinople without making themselves known at Robert College and the Bible House, the doors of which are always open to respectable people of whatever nationality.

Mr. Mahan also professed to have seen in the library one of the fifty copies of the Bible made by order of the Emperor Constantine, a parchment in Latin bearing the emperor's name, two and one-half by four feet, and two feet thick.

Of this assertion General Wallace said:

"If such a copy was there, I believe the sultan, ap-



prised of the fact, would have no disposition to keep it hidden away. In any event, it was of the highest importance that all the circumstances of the finding should be witnessed by people well known and of unquestionable character."

General Wallace received permission from the sultan to visit the library in company with a member of the imperial board of censors, President Washburn of Robert College, Dr. Riggs, Dr. Long, and Professor Grosvenor of the faculty, Pangeris Bey, an aide-de-camp of the sultan, and a distinguished translator, and Mr. Gargiulo, the dragoman of the American legation.

When the visit was paid all were present except President Washburn, Professor Grosvenor, and Dr. Riggs. A diligent search was made, and no book answering to the description given by Mr. Mahan was found, nor was there any trace of Hebrew manuscript in whole or in part, relating to the story of the Magi.

Zia Bey, the librarian, assured General Wallace that he had been in charge of the library for thirty years, and it contained no such manuscripts as Mr. Mahan professed to have seen.

General Wallace said that, to the best of his recollection, the books and manuscripts were almost all in Turkish and Arabic, but he recalled a Bible in Greek of ordinary size, printed at Leyden, with a copy of the psalms in Latin and Greek, on parchment.

In his corroboration, Dr. Albert A. S. Long wrote to General Wallace:

"No one, I think, who is familiar with men of his race, faith, and position, could have any doubt of the sincerity of the librarian, Zia Bey, in his statements disclaiming all knowledge of such books as those described by him. I may be allowed, also, to say that the description of the

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

volume as given by your American correspondent is such as to cause me greatly to wonder why the fortunate discoverer of such rare archæological and paleographical treasure has failed to report the same to the American Oriental Society, or to some other learned society, who would be delighted to receive any well-authenticated account of discovery throwing light upon so many disputed points."

"The librarian also certified that except those named by General Wallace, all the books in the library were in Arabic, Turkish, and Persian languages; and that during his thirty years' incumbency, but three or four parties, besides that of General Wallace, had visited the library, of whom he recalled the Emperor of Austria and the Empress Eugénie.

"Mr. Mahan was charged with unchristian and unministerial conduct, falsehood, and fraud. By some strange method of reasoning he was exonerated from accusations of falsehood, but, all the other charges being sustained, he was suspended from the ministry for one year.

Shortly after President Garfield's inauguration, General Wallace wrote to him, finally declining, however, the reappointment which was offered him. The letter was as follows:

"March 9, 1881.

"*His Excellency, President Garfield:*

"SIR,—The newspapers report quite a number of gentlemen from different sections of the Union as applicants for the office of governor of New Mexico. It may serve your policy, not to speak of your personal preferences, to appoint one of them in my place. To leave you perfectly free to do so, I respectfully offer my resignation, remarking that if it should be your pleasure to continue me in the office, I will do my best, as heretofore, to discharge its duties satisfactorily.

"It may be proper to say in explanation, and speaking from experience, that whoever your appointee may be, the conditions of the territory are so peculiar that his ad-

## LEW WALLACE

ministration cannot be successful without some affirmative act in assurance to the public of your confidence in him, and your determination to give him your hearty support.

"I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your friend and servant,

"LEW WALLACE, Governor New Mexico."

He was subsequently tendered the mission to Turkey, which he accepted.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

### XII

Letters relating to *Ben-Hur*: Paul H. Hayne—Dufferin—W. W. Story—F. Marion Crawford—General C. P. Stone—Priest's letter.

PAUL H. HAYNE TO GENERAL WALLACE

"COPSE HILL, AUGUSTA, GEORGIA, *December 2, 1880.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—I did not think that the man lived in America who could have written such a book as *Ben-Hur*.

"It is, *me judice*, a noble and very powerful prose poem. A work which must be placed on the same shelf with Kingsley's *Hypatia*. What can I say more in its commendation?

"Pages in it have thrilled me through and through, while I remark that never on any occasion have you sunk below the dignity of your majestic theme.

"What may be termed the prologue to the moving drama—the description, namely, of the manner in which the 'Three Wise Men' were called to visit the sacred city and recognize the infant Redeemer—is singularly beautiful, pathetic, and, I may add, original.

"Ben-Hur's misfortunes, and the disappearance of his family, and the grand sea-fight and its results, struck me especially; yet beyond these even I appreciate the wonderful reserve of power exhibited in your introduction of the young Christ, where he gives the poor prisoner of the Roman water to refresh him by the road-side.

"Simple, straightforward, but eloquent, your narrative carries one irresistibly along from the impressive opening to the no less impressive *dénouement*; and, moreover, there are episodes in it full of significance and instruction. For



example, I am glad that a scholar like yourself should confirm an opinion I have long held, and maintained against odds, to the effect that the unspeakable corruption of Roman morals during the latter years of the empire did *not* originate in Rome herself, but rather in the East—that corrupt and fast-decaying Orient which subtly revenged itself upon the Roman vanquisher by lapping him in luxury and filling his veins with sensual poison. . . .”

“SATURDAY, *December 4th.*

“Since writing the above, I have reread the latter half of your tale, and its effect (as always happens in the case of any genuine work of art) has been intensified by examination and analysis.

“Your picture of the chariot-race at Antioch, where Ben-Hur gains the advantage over Messala, is so vivid and stirring that, ‘by the splendor of Solomon,’ as your Sheik Ilderim would exclaim, it is almost enough to make an old man young. But perhaps the master-scene of the book occurs in that chapter which describes the disentombing of Ben-Hur’s mother and sister, and their midnight visit to their old home in Jerusalem.

“The blended horror and pathos of this *tremendous* encounter—for what other adjective can be used?—this meeting, after the lapse of a decade, between the members of a desolated household, where passionate affection must be stifled, and the loving women pass like ghosts or shadows by the form of the unconscious son and brother, are indeed inexpressible, and would, if embodied in some great painting, electrify all observers of sensibility, and take its place among the immortal *chefs-d’œuvre* of the pencil.

“I write with enthusiasm, because I feel deeply the unusual excellence of your production; nor can I fail to perceive how conscientiously you have worked up all its details. I have learned more (among other things) of the minutiae of the discipline in the Roman navy from your narrative of the sea-fight, and conquest of the pirate fleet,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

than ever I could gather from the lumbering prosiness of orthodox historians.

"Of course, in the ordinary sense of the term, *Ben-Hur* is not likely to become 'popular,' but by scholars and thinkers of every conceivable grade this singularly graphic performance must be cherished.

"It is an honor to its author, an honor to American literature in one of the purest and highest departments of art.

"You have published a previous work, I see, called *The Fair God*. May I learn from you (if you do me the favor of acknowledging the present letter) where I can procure this book?

"Meanwhile, with renewal of congratulations upon your successful accomplishment of a great and difficult task, and thanks for the hours of intense enjoyment derived from it, pray believe me,

"Faithfully yours,

"PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE."

GENERAL LEW WALLACE TO PAUL H. HAYNE

"CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA, *January 19, 1881.*

"DEAR SIR,—Your letter, with its good things so pleasantly said, chased me from Santa Fé to Washington, and from Washington to this place; and I avail myself of the first leisure moment to acknowledge it.

"I hope you will allow me to be candid. Many flattering letters have reached me, *Ben-Hur* the subject; somehow, though the reason for it is a trifle obscure, the one bearing your signature has given me as much pleasure as any of the others.

"It was a surprise. In thinking over the question, familiar doubtless to you as it is to every writer—the question everlastingly thrusting itself in the intervals between paragraphs and verses, *who will read my work when it is done?* it never occurred to me that it would find favor in the South; much more that *you*, admittedly the singer

of the South, personally a stranger to me, would put yourself to such trouble, and write me a paper so long, so plainly spontaneous, so enthusiastic. Not merely a surprise, it is a most agreeable surprise.

"I thank you, among other things, that you caught the idea underlying the First Book of the volume. It was designed to be a kind of prologue, in which old Balthasar and the Christ might be crystallized, and the *tone* of all that comes after indicated—doing for the book what the symphony does for music.

"That thought of such a work has visited minds far more capable than mine cannot be doubted. Many and many a time the birth of the Christ as an incident and the Crucifixion as a catastrophe have passed weirdlike through goodly brains hot with the labor of invention; but dismissed because of one point of incurable trouble—what was to be done with the thirty years of silence, but once broken, between the beautiful beginning and the terrible ending? That, I own, gave me infinite perplexity, until at last I resolved to fill it with accessory incidents which should tend to give the reader an idea of the moral, social, and political condition of the world at that period; out of which shrewd minds might evolve one of the most powerful arguments for the divinity of Christ—evolve it, I say, for it would not do to say plainly that such was the object—*viz.*, that mankind in its organizations and ideas of all sorts was so debased as to be past salvation except by direct interposition of the Almighty. That idea gave me coherence and opportunity and rest in labor. *It made the book possible.*

"But I beg your pardon. I sat down to say in simplest phrase, 'Thank you for your letter.' If I have given way to egotism, bear with me; you have provoked it. Had you been less a poet well known to us here in the Northwest, I should not have been lured into the mistake.

"You are also kind enough to allude to my first venture in the literary field. I mean *The Fair God*. I have taken the liberty to order a copy of it to be sent you from

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the publishers. Let me hope you will accept it; let me further hope you will find time and pleasure to write me again, and often.

“With renewal of my sincere thanks, I am most truly  
your friend,  
LEW WALLACE.”

FROM LORD DUFFERIN

“CONSTANTINOPLE, *April* 19, 1882.

“MY DEAR GENERAL WALLACE,—I sat up the night before last to finish your beautiful book, and I assure you I find it difficult to express my admiration of it. It is wonderful how you have interwoven the sacred elements of the story with the human interest, without producing any sense of incongruity, or wounding the reverential sensitiveness of the reader. All your characters live, and one takes the deepest interest in their fortunes. The spectacular descriptions are full of color, light, and exhilaration, and you have succeeded in introducing the gorgeousness of Eastern coloring with admirable force.

“Portions of the story are most affecting; and the sea-fight and the chariot-race are wonderfully dramatic. In fact, from beginning to end I read it with breathless interest and delight, and I can quite understand your having received the thanks of those whom you have aided to realize, more acutely than their own feeble imaginations enabled them to do, the heart-breaking incidents of the Crucifixion.

“It is with the utmost sincerity that I congratulate you on your great achievement.

"Believe me, my dear General Wallace,

"Yours very sincerely,

“DUFFERIN.”

GENERAL WALLACE TO LORD DUFFERIN

“ April 20, 1882.

“MY DEAR LORD DUFFERIN,—I could not help being delighted with the note you were good enough to send me yesterday, with remarks upon my *Ben-Hur*.



## LEW WALLACE

"Such praise is, after all, the incentive and true reward of a writer, and with all my heart I thank you for it; and none the less because in this instance it comes from one himself distinguished in the world of letters.

"Very truly your much obliged friend and servant,

"LEW WALLACE.

"*Earl Dufferin, British Ambassador.*"

W. W. STORY TO MRS. SUSAN E. WALLACE

"PALAZZO BARBERINI, ROME, *February 15, 1884.*

"MY DEAR MRS. BEN-HUR,—I was very much touched by your kind remembrance of me, and ought long ago to have thanked you, as I do now most heartily, for the handsome *Kifyah* which you were so good as to send me. It was a great surprise as well as a great pleasure to receive such a token of your kindly feeling towards us.

"My excuse for not writing before is simply this. I wanted first to read *Ben-Hur*, so as to be able to say something about it. But, with the thousand interruptions to which our evening life is subject, it was not easy to find a series of evenings which we could devote to the reading, and, as all were anxious to hear it, we determined to read aloud and enjoy it together. This, at last, we have done, my wife and I alternately reading to each other; and what do we say, now that we have finished the last page with deep regret to come to the end? We all agree that it is a most remarkable book; of deep and sustained interest, vivid to an extraordinary degree, full of life and character and power. Throughout it is masterly, and there are passages and scenes which stir one's blood like the sound of the trumpet. The galley life, the naval fight with the pirates, the race in the circus are so full of fire and life that we seem to have been there as spectators or actors. I cannot imagine how General Wallace could have created them, without ever having personally visited and been familiar with the life and scenery in the East. It seems almost impossible. There is no smell of books, no cram (to speak

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

slang) in any of it. The characters are admirably drawn, and are constantly consistent, and the entire book has left a deep impression on my mind. It ought to have a very great public success, and I hope it has. If it has not, then it has been badly mismanaged by the publishers. You must not think that, in saying this, I am simply wishing to say what is pleasant. I speak the truth according to my own feeling and judgment.

"We remember our only too brief intercourse with you and your husband with great pleasure, and only wish that it could have been prolonged. Some time let us hope that we may again see you here or elsewhere (but better here) for a longer time.

"With our united kind regards to you and General Wallace, I am, yours most faithfully,

"W. W. STORY."

FROM GENERAL C. P. STONE

(Regarding *The Fair God*.)

"FLORENCE, *February 2*, 1883.

"MY DEAR GENERAL,—You see I am on the wing to get back and breathe the air of my mountains. But I fold my wings for the moment to express to you my gratitude for the pleasant hours I have passed in reading your admirable *Fair God*.

"I can truly say that never have I read with more pleasure a work of fiction. Mexico has been for me a land of delight for many long years; and there is no work on the conquest which I have heard of which I have not read—many works of romance have I read, too. But no one before you has approached my imagination of the Aztecs and their conquerors. You have filled my idea. I admire you and thank you for it.

"Your beautiful book arrived just as we were in the midst of our packing up to leave Egypt. My family left three or four days before I did, and sailed for Palermo, while I came to Brindisi and thence to Rome. There my family joined me, and we came back here together. I have

LEW WALLACE

installed them on the banks of the Arno, to pass three months, so that they may avoid the winter passage of the Atlantic, but I shall make haste to get to the only good land, and then prepare for their reception.

"Just before leaving Egypt I had quite a long and interesting interview with Lord Dufferin, and it gave me sincere pleasure to listen to his appreciation of you and your course as American representative, and as a *man*.

"May good success and great prosperity go with you, my dear general.

"Please present my wife and myself most kindly to Mrs. Wallace and Mrs. Lane, and believe me,

"Ever sincerely yours,

"C. P. STONE."

FROM F. MARION CRAWFORD

"PALAZZO ALTEMPS, ROME, *January 25, 1884.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—When I last saw you at our door, and you laughingly suggested to me a journey to Constantinople, I little dreamed that the idea was likely to be realized. Now, however, it is more than probable that before three weeks have passed I shall be in Ionian waters, on my way to the Bosphorus. I do not understand the strong impulse that drives me there, nor am I superstitiously inclined, and believe a hidden influence is brought to bear upon me by astral shapes, black magic, or bogies generally, but I cannot find courage to say 'no' to my inspiration. Moreover, in a few days I shall have finished my 'Winter's Tale,' and shall be free as the wind which bloweth hither and thither as it listeth, and no man can tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth.

"I will say this, however, that an attraction, and a very great one, too, lies in the prospect of meeting and knowing better the author of *Ben-Hur*. Had I been able to talk with you when you were here, I could have told you of sleepless nights spent in New York, two years ago, in reading and rereading the marvellous description of the chariot-race, and the many wonderful passages of vivid interest

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

you have so skilfully woven in those most fascinating pages.

"I need rest and sunshine warmer than this, and perhaps change, but for days the name Constantinople has been ringing in my ears, and I am determined to follow the instinctive prompting that calls me there.

"I write this by way of a foretaste to myself of the pleasure in store for me in meeting you so soon again; and in that most pleasant hope, I am, my dear sir,

"Very truly yours,

"F. MARION CRAWFORD.

"*His Excellency, General Wallace.*"

It was not alone the author of *Ben-Hur* who drew the "Roman Singer" to Constantinople as by subtle magnetism. He met there the beautiful Elizabeth Berdan, who became his wife.

The following letter was written by a Roman Catholic priest to a personal friend, and as it was not intended for publication, the names are withheld. It was sent to Mrs. Wallace, with the subjoined note:

"This hasty line is only for the purpose of asking you to read the enclosed letter. That a Catholic priest should make *Ben-Hur* the subject of confessional counsel is noteworthy and significant. There could be no higher word on the side of spirit. May God bless and keep you prays  
"C. C."

The accompanying letter reads:

"DEAR MISS C.,—If I had known that my card was to reach the author's eyes, I should gladly have written further expression of the profound admiration I have ever held for his wonderful creation, which I have always found my most inspiring spiritual reading at Christmas-tide. During the play, when I felt the audience becoming a worshipful congregation under the influence of Christ's story,



## LEW WALLACE

I adverted for the first time to the immense missionary work *Ben-Hur* has done. I am sure the author will receive the blessing of the Master of the Harvest for the countless souls his labor has garnered. I have frequently, since Christmas night, recommended my penitents to go to the play.

“Oh, if we, all of us, might only keep its lesson in our hearts.”

# AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

## XIII

Friendly relations with the sultan—Release of Greek prisoners—Cleveland's election and General Wallace's resignation—Last interview with the sultan—Acceptance of a decoration—The parting gift to the sultan—*The Prince of India*.

FROM PROFESSOR E. B. GROSVENOR TO FRIENDS IN  
AMERICA

"In August, 1881, General Wallace was to be received in solemn audience by the sultan, for the formal presentation of his credentials as minister of the United States to the Sublime Porte. He did me the honor of inviting me to accompany him as a member of his suite on that important and interesting occasion. He also extended a like invitation to the Hon. S. S. Cox, member of Congress, and chairman of the house committee on foreign affairs, at that time visiting Constantinople, where four years later he was to become minister himself. The invitation afforded a rare privilege, and in both cases was accepted with delight.

"General and Mrs. Wallace were passing the summer at Therapia, a village on the European side of the Bosphorus, nearly twelve miles north of the sultan's palace at Dolma Baghtche, and not far from the mouth of the Black Sea. My home was at Roumeli Hissar, about half-way between Therapia and the palace. There General Wallace had kindly proposed to stop as he descended the Bosphorus in the state caique.

"The weather was never more ideal, even in the balmy East, than on the appointed day. The Bosphorus, the most beautiful and the most wonderful stream on earth, was never lovelier and more entrancing than when I gazed

across it northward at the approaching caique. The graceful craft, snow-white save for a narrow band of gold, came on like a bird. It glided over rather than through the waves. The oars of the ten caiquedjis rose and fell in perfect unison. Even in the distance could be discerned, floating from above the prow and gladdening the eye, the stars and stripes. Soon the great golden eagle with wings outspread over the bow became distinct. Then the caiquedjis stood out in Oriental picturesqueness, men of statuesque physique, their crimson fezes and voluminous white *shelvars* and tiny scarlet jackets, gold-embroidered, combining in gorgeous effect. At the prow, still more bedizened in gilt lace and Turkish uniform, stood Mehmet, chief *cavass* of the American legation, himself a Moslem and a soldier, appointed by the Ottoman government thirty years before to watch over the person of each American envoy, and always faithfully and devotedly fulfilling his trust.

"Upon cushions at the stern sat General Wallace, and with him Mr. Cox, Consul-General Heap, and Mr. Bigelow, marshal of the American legation.

"Quickly the landing-place of the palace was reached. Here Ibrahim Bey, one of the imperial chamberlains, was waiting to receive General Wallace in behalf of the sultan. Also waiting, and to form part of the suite, were several consuls and vice-consuls, and, still more essential, Gargiulo, first dragoman, or interpreter, polyglot linguist, experienced and wise counsellor of all the American ministers since 1873.

"General Wallace, followed by his suite, was conducted to a spacious room in the Dolma Baghtche palace, where he was to be served with coffee and cigarettes, and to remain until court carriages arrived. The presentation was to take place not there but at Yildiz Kiosk, the Mansion of the Star, a plain though stately edifice, his majesty's favorite residence, situated on the summit of a commanding hill about a mile distant.

"Five minutes passed, possibly ten, but of the carriages

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

not a sign. And now was afforded an instance of that quick grasp of a situation, and of that promptitude to act which were to render General Wallace's diplomatic career in Turkey a remarkable success. He knew that almost all the arrogant customs, devised centuries ago, when the Turk was strong, to humiliate a foreign envoy, and through him the sovereign whom that envoy represented, had been discontinued in these later days of Turkish weakness. He knew that one such custom survived, inasmuch as newly accredited envoys were compelled, after arrival for their first audience, to wait until it was the good pleasure of the Turk that their waiting should end. Calmly, in his ordinary tone, General Wallace said to Mr. Gargiulo, 'Please say to his excellency, Ibrahim Bey, that I wish to know why the carriages are not here.' The message was given. 'They are coming,' replied Ibrahim Bey, astonished and confused. 'They are coming.' A moment later General Wallace remarked, 'Please say to his excellency that I do not wish to wait.' 'But they are here! They are here!' exclaimed the chamberlain. At once he led the way to the court-yard where the carriages stood. There they had probably been a long time standing, and there, had the new minister been a man less apt, they would assuredly have stood much longer.

"Thirty mounted *zaptiehs*, their guns pointed to the front, right, and left, galloped in advance as a guard of honor. Upon another impetuous steed towered the bulky form of the *cavass*, Mehmet. Then came the ponderous carriage in which rode General Wallace, attended by Mr. Gargiulo. In the next carriage, elaborate but less imposing, were Mr. Heap, Mr. Bigelow, Mr. Cox, and myself. Two other carriages followed with the rest of the retinue. A score of mounted *zaptiehs* brought up the rear. Up the hill the procession clattered at topmost speed, as if in apology for the attempted preliminary delay. At the gateway of Yildiz Kiosk the *zaptiehs* parted to form two lines, one on each side of the road. The massive gates swung open and clanged together after the admission of



## LEW WALLACE

the minister and his suite, the guard of honor being left outside. Another escort, a detachment of the sultan's private guard, walked slowly and sedately on the right and left, and at an almost funereal pace the procession moved to the main doorway of the kiosk.

"General Wallace and suite were at once ushered into the large but simple reception-room on the left. There the grand dignitaries of the empire waited to welcome the new minister. Among them were Osman Pasha, minister of war, short, broad-shouldered, swarthy, muscular, with whose praises Europe still rang because of his stubborn defence of Plevna; Assim Pasha, minister of foreign affairs; Osman Bey, first chamberlain of the imperial house, and Munir Pasha, an elegant gentleman, grand master of ceremonies. Nubian slaves brought in cigarettes and coffee. The coffee was served in tiny porcelain cups of almost fabulous lightness and beauty. The cups rested in *zarfs*, or holders, of solid gold, thickly encrusted with diamonds. Meanwhile the conversation was general and informal.

"In a few minutes the second chamberlain entered to announce that his majesty was ready. All the Turkish dignitaries at once withdrew except the minister of foreign affairs and the grand master of ceremonies. These latter officials remained to lead the procession to the audience. Behind them walked General Wallace and Mr. Gargiulo, then the suite two by two. After ascending a wide, winding stairway, at the moment we reached the broad platform above, great folding-doors in front were noiselessly thrown open, and we found ourselves at the entrance of the vast and splendid audience-chamber. This is sometimes called the throne-room, but in it was no throne or seat of any sort. On our left, lined against the wall in attitude of abject humility, one hand upon the sword which was thrust behind and one hand upon the breast, were most of the dignitaries whom we had met below.

"Opposite, at the farther end of the room, stood a slight gentleman of medium height, wearing no ornament or

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

decoration of any kind, dressed throughout in European costume save that upon his head rested the monotonous invariable crimson fez. Later on we were to remark the deathlike pallor of his face, the thinness of his lips, and his air of melancholy, almost dejection. This man, refined, unpretentious, almost shrinking, was his imperial majesty, Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan II., the thirty-fourth sabregirded sultan, and the twenty-first in direct descent from Sultan Osman Khan I., the founder of his house.

"Assim Pasha, the minister of foreign affairs, and Munir Pasha, the grand master of ceremonies, took their position facing us on the sultan's left, the grand master a little to the rear. General Wallace, Mr. Gargiulo on his right, advanced to within a few yards of the sultan, the minister and suite making a deep bow, to which the sultan responded.

"Assim Pasha was not blessed with a musical voice. In an attempted whisper resembling the croak of a raven, he stated to his imperial master in a few Turkish words the reason of General Wallace's presence. In low, faint, almost inaudible tones, the sultan replied, expressing his pleasure at meeting General Wallace and his interest in the United States. This reply Assim Pasha repeated in Turkish to Mr. Gargiulo, who repeated the same in English to General Wallace. And thus the sentences journeyed from sultan to minister and from minister to sultan, every sentence transmitted by two intermediaries. General Wallace then asked permission to present individually each member of his suite, which permission his majesty graciously accorded. Thus far everything had proceeded according to the prescribed programme, each word having been submitted and approved prior to the audience. Then followed a brief, less formal conversation between the sultan and the American minister.

"During the audience, it was my good-fortune to stand next to General Wallace, directly behind him. As I looked upon that martial figure, clad in the uniform of a major-general of the United States, splendidly erect, his head not bowed—so dignified, so composed, so manly—the one

## LEW WALLACE

absorbing sentiment in my heart was pride—pride in him as the representative of our country, and pride in the country which can produce and send forth such sons.

“The interview seemed drawing to its end. ‘And now,’ said General Wallace to Mr. Gargiulo, ‘say to his imperial majesty that as representative of the American people I desire to take his majesty’s hand.’ This was a proposition unheard of and almost inconceivable. The Turks do not shake hands even with one another. For a foreigner, a Christian, a *giaour*, though an accredited envoy, to aspire to touch the hand of the padishah, would, in the mind of the orthodox Moslem believer, seem sacrilegious presumption. ‘But—’ hesitated Mr. Gargiulo. ‘Say it,’ insisted General Wallace. To the thunderstricken Assim Pasha was repeated what General Wallace had said. Assim Pasha remained dumb. ‘What is it? What does his excellency say,’ asked the sultan, who observed something unusual had occurred. With a protesting circumlocution, impossible to render in the English language, Assim Pasha, almost prostrate at his master’s feet, conveyed the audacious request. For a second the sultan appeared equally perplexed. Then suddenly, with the faintest glimmer of a smile on his pallid face, he stepped forward, and the two hands met!

“A few words more, and the interview was over. The general and his party were again escorted to the reception-room below. There speedily reassembled all the dignitaries who had witnessed the presentation. Once more coffee was served in the marvellous cups. But in the social atmosphere a new element had entered, invisible, but felt. It made itself recognized in the furtive and bewildered glances which those exalted minions of an Oriental system cast upon the strange man from the West, who had overridden tradition, and as an equal had pressed their sovereign’s hand.

“The minister was to hold many more interviews with the sultan. But in that first interview he had impressed his virile personality upon Abdul Hamid.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"The second interview occurred a few weeks later. At its conclusion the sultan remarked to his most intimate confidant, 'I believe that American is an honest man'—*doghru adam dir*. But the English word honest only partially indicates all the virtues that an Oriental crowds into the Turkish word *doghru*, with which the sultan had dubbed him. Because of this early recognition of his integrity and sagacity, General Wallace, during his four years' residence in Constantinople, exerted a personal influence upon the sultan such as no envoy of any foreign nation had exerted before, and such as no envoy has exerted since. Because of it, he was enabled effectually to guard all the varied interests of his fellow-countrymen in the East."

Life in Constantinople is described in the following letters:

TO SUSAN E. WALLACE

"HOTEL LUXEMBURG, CONSTANTINOPLE, *December, 1881.*

"As I am now pretty well, I may tell that I have been in bed six days and nights, the effect entirely of cold caught on the Danube, and the long term following during which I had no earthly chance to take care of myself. The lumbago was nothing but the old bone-ache premonitory of intermittent fever. Richard's himself again.

"If I had not suffered so much I could afford to laugh over one of my mishaps. At London, at Berlin, and Vienna, I was told that there is no quarantine against passengers from Varna. At Varna, nobody knew how the matter stood. I telegraphed the consul, and he replied, 'Ten days quarantine at Kavak.' A pretty state of affairs truly! The very thing I had gone through northern Europe to avoid. There was no help for it then. At Kavak, sure enough, the steamer dropped anchor for ten days. I did not despair. Mr. Gargiulo, the dragoman, met me in the morning early, and I sent him to Yildiz to inform the sultan of my arrival and imprisonment. So, the morning of



## LEW WALLACE

the fifth day, the quarantine was raised by imperial order; the ships and steamers waiting—a goodly company—lifted anchors and hurried towards the city.

“Hardly was I settled in a chair, before an aide-de-camp of the sultan presented himself, with his majesty’s compliments, and requested me to come to the palace. Sick and wretched as I was, I must go, for a royal request is a command. What misery I endured in the three hours of private audience in the little kiosk! In full uniform, I thought my sword-belt weighed a thousand pounds and would kill me. Then it was so cold. The sultan might wear his furs, but I could not put on an overcoat. I thought of the Spartan boy who stole the fox, while I smiled away in regulation urbanity.

“From Yildiz I went to bed, and sent for the doctor.

“Weather wonderfully fine, like early June with us.”

## TO WILLIAM WALLACE

“CONSTANTINOPLE, *January 10, 1882.*

“I am getting on pretty well here. As you know, every American is supposed to be equal to any office, or rather the requirements of every position; but to me diplomacy was a new business and to be learned *ab initio*. I do not believe men are born to anything; art, poetry, oratory, the counting of money—mastery comes only by long study and practice. And I have acted on my belief in this matter and have tried to profit by the mistakes of others.

“The sultan is very friendly. He sent, a few days ago, to inquire if I was fond of riding, and to ask if I would accept the present of a horse. This in addition to his offer, in writing, of a decoration (enclosed find translation) I refused, declining all except his portrait, in oil, life-size, and the pardon of eight poor Greeks who are reported sick and in prison, dying here in Constantinople. Their offence was hooting and groaning at some other Greeks whom they saw marching in a column of Turkish soldiery. I have not heard his majesty’s answer to the last request. The por-

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

trait he will send, so he promises, as soon as he can have it taken.

"Here is the letter, originally in French:

"YILDIZ, *December 5, 1881.*

"MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE,—I wish to inform you that in testimony of his sentiments of esteem and high consideration, and in the hope of giving expression of his desire of strengthening the ties between his government and that of the United States, his majesty has the intention of conferring on you the First Class of his Order Imperial *Medjiedie*.

"In congratulating you on the sympathy that you have known how to inspire in my august sovereign, I have the honor, Monsieur le Ministre, to seize this occasion of expressing the assurance of my very distinguished consideration.

(Signed) MUNIR BEY,

"First Dragoman of His Imperial Majesty,  
"Sultan Abdul Hamid."

Our wise law forbidding acceptance of valuable gifts obliged General Wallace to decline the order. A copy of *Ben-Hur*, handsomely bound, was sent to the palace, with this inscription:

"*To His Imperial Majesty, Sultan Abdul Hamid,*

"This volume is, with his permission, respectfully presented. And I pray to make known to him the admiration I have come to have for him as a monarch who nobly defends his sovereignty, and at the same time proves his enlightened love for his people, by founding schools, by patronizing learning, and, not least, by a wise toleration of religious opinion throughout his empire.

"LEW WALLACE."

The petition for the liberation of the eight Greek prisoners was granted, but by some mistake the wrong men were released, as will be seen by the following ex-

## LEW WALLACE

tract from a letter of Mr. Thomas Ath Pasquides, dated October 12, 1882, addressed to Mrs. Hill, American teacher in Athens:

"Concerning the release of some gentlemen of Janina (Epirus) from Constantinople prisons, the starry son of America heard favorably, and granted my prayer. General Wallace, the plenipotentiary minister, succeeded so well as to have an imperial ordinance issued on September 14th, the advertisement of which was also inserted in the *Times* on the 16th. But the ministry of Turkey, instead of releasing the imprisoned Epirotes, some of them sick and under treatment, caused others to be released, and the unhappy Epirotes still remain in prison. They rejoice, to be sure, at hearing that their brothers of Macedonia and Syria, who had been thrown into prison on the same day with the Epirotes, obtained their liberty.

"After this recital I solicit the respected Mrs. Hill to be so good, if possible, to address to the Hon. General Wallace, minister plenipotentiary for the United States of America, a few words and recommend him to speed the issue of a new imperial ordinance especially for the sick prisoners of Janina.

"God grant and repay it to her. Asking your pardon for the trouble, I remain always

"Your most obedient servant,

"T. A. PASQUIDES,

"Member of the Delegation from Janina."

After consultation with officials, the mistake as to the names of the prisoners was righted by allowing the release ordered to stand, and another imperial rescript was issued directing the liberation of the other eight also. Sixteen men rejoiced in deliverance from dungeons, where they might have died unknown had not a happy chance opened the way of escape.

In testimony of their gratitude, New Year's Day,

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

1883, General Wallace received a curious present of wood-carving, with a poem from the liberated Greeks.

*“ February 3, 1885.*

“I have been to a crush ball at the Greek minister’s fancy dress, and it was really beautiful. The costumes were striking and elegant, the maskers sustaining their parts well. I have never seen anything more brilliant.

“In my interview with the sultan the day I arrived, he remarked, ‘The election in your country did not turn out as we hoped.’ I replied, ‘No, your majesty, and I am sorry for it.’ He then asked, ‘Are you to remain with us after the new president comes in?’ I answered, ‘No. There is a custom which has the force of law requiring me to resign my commission.’ His face brightened, and he said, ‘Well, why not, when you leave the service with your own country, take service with me?’ I saw he was in deep earnest, and that I must be very cautious in reply. ‘I feel very much, your majesty, the high compliment you pay me; you could not offer stronger proof of your confidence and good-will; but I cannot afford to accept your offer.’ He then asked some questions of the interpreter about my salary, and, being answered, turned to me, and said, ‘I will make you ambassador to Paris or London.’ At this it was time to be decided, and I replied: ‘I am a thousand times obliged to your majesty, but, admitting the overture is made in good faith, it will not be possible for me to avail myself of it, unless your majesty can see the way clear to give me opportunity to serve your interests in my own country. There it would be agreeable to me, and would not interfere with other business I have in mind.’ He took the answer evidently as a declination, and said: ‘Very well. I will write and ask President Cleveland to permit you to remain here as representative of your government through his administration.’

““That would be a great compliment, and shows your majesty’s good feeling towards me, but the custom of which I spoke is imperative. If I remain as minister under Presi-



## LEW WALLACE

dent Cleveland, I should be forever trying to explain to my party why I did so.' After I went out of the kiosk, the sultan called back the interpreter, and asked him privately if he thought I was serious in objecting to his proposed petition to the new president. Gargiulo replied that he thought I was, as he had heard me say several times that I could not stay in office under a new administration. Since that time I have heard nothing further on the subject, which may be considered at an end.

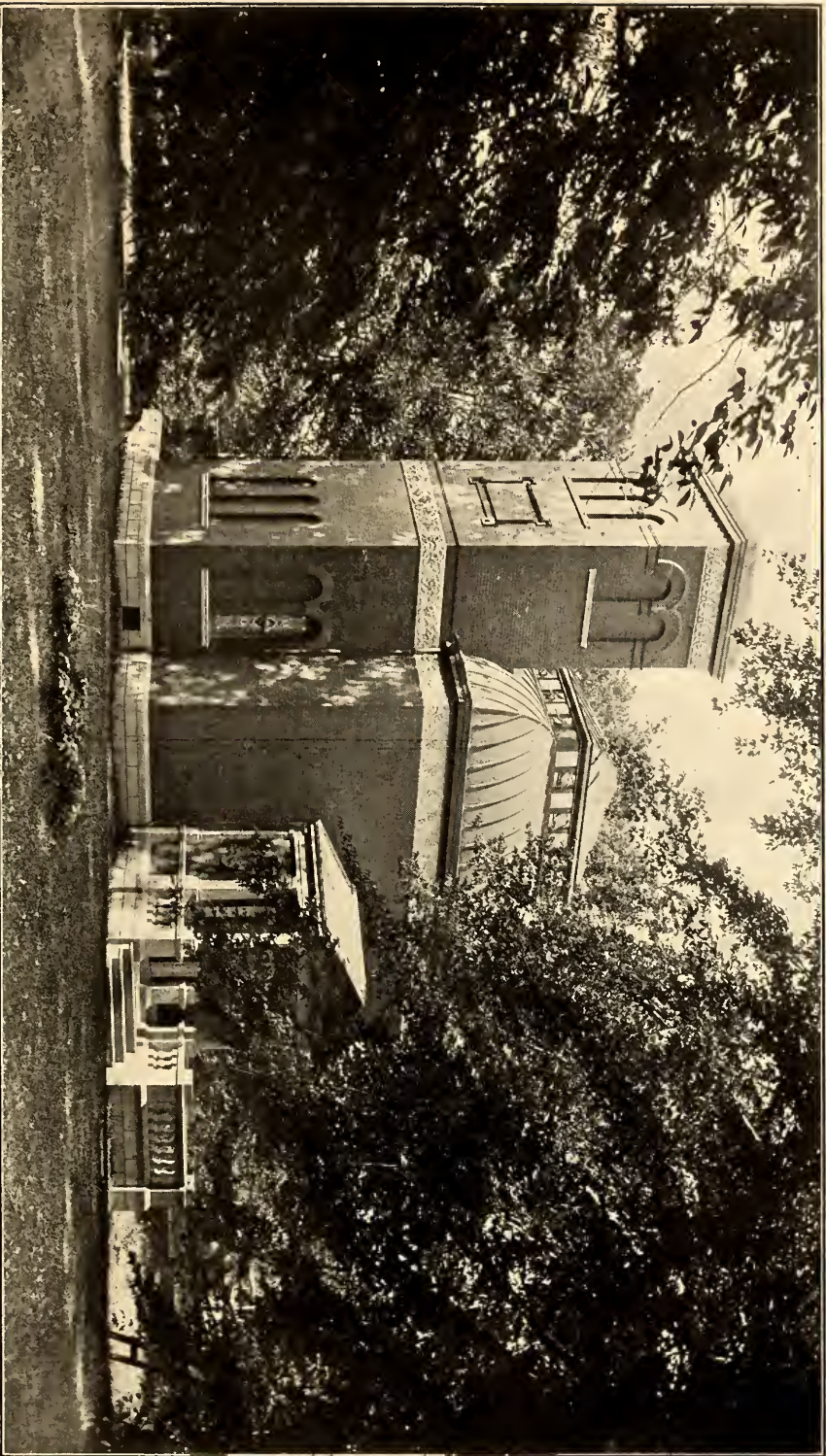
"Turning to something more pleasant, I have a letter from the Harpers reminding me that I am to write the Christmas article for their magazine next year. They want an outline of the proposed article now, in order to put their artists at work at once, the intention being to illustrate it in the highest style of the art by the best designers. I have answered accordingly, and my synopsis is in preparation, but it is slow work, owing chiefly to the difficulty of obtaining authorities here. If I were at home there would be no trouble at all, as I have at hand there the books of reference needed. Fortunately the paper will be an imaginative character, involving the Mother, the Divine Child, and Joseph—of which more hereafter.

"My good friends the missionaries have been in, and other visitors have filled the day."

LEWIS WALLACE TO SUSAN E. WALLACE

"CONSTANTINOPLE, *March 3, 1885.*

"Look sharp at that date; it is correct. To be sure of it I have just looked at the Longfellow Calendar, which hangs above my head, a present from and reminder of Houghton, Mifflin & Company. The hour is now just half after nine o'clock; five minutes after noon the day will go treading harder and harder on the heels of to-morrow, and to-morrow will be March 4th! At ten o'clock to-morrow I shall send out a telegram, of which this will be a copy, and you may record it in your book of remembrance—'Secretary of State, Washington,—The president will please con-



GENERAL WALLACE'S STUDY



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

sider my resignation tendered.—Wallace.’ As there is no doubt of its acceptance, we may as well regard the curtain rung down on this act of my life. I have tried many things in course of the drama—the law, soldiering, politics, authorship, and, lastly, diplomacy—and if I may pass judgment upon the success achieved in each, it seems now that when I sit down finally in the old man’s gown and slippers, helping the cat to keep the fireplace warm, I shall look back upon *Ben-Hur* as my best performance, and this mission near the sultan as the next best.

“If any looker-on of the play should ask whether in my secret heart I regret giving up the office, I answer, ‘No, I have seen all there is of it; I have tasted its sweetness; I have squeezed out all its honor; my successor is now welcome to it, and the sooner he comes to let me off, the better I shall be pleased.’ There is my answer, candidly spoken, and it has full sanction of my judgment.

“Well, what next?

“Four years ago that would have been a solemn question. It is not nearly so serious to-day. I am not now to be driven to the law again, that most detestable of human occupations. I look for better employment.

“Am I going home to idleness? No, no. My feet and hands may be still, not so the mind—that has its aspirations yet, and it will work, for it has a law unto itself. Idleness is one thing, doing is another. What I will do must be decided when I reach home. I know what I should love to do—to build a study; to write, and to think of nothing else. I want to bury myself in a den of books. I want to saturate myself with the elements of which they are made, and breathe their atmosphere until I am of it. Not a book-worm, being which is to give off no utterances; but a man in the world of writing—one with a pen which shall stop men to listen to it, whether they wish to or not. It has come to pass that writing is activity which makes a noise like the galloping of many horses. There are pens which give the sound of locomotives, and, hearing them in the distances, society waits for them impatiently. Such

## LEW WALLACE

a pen is what I want. Can I attain it? I believe so. It is my final ambition, anyhow, and, whether I do so or not, the opportunity is partly mine, and perhaps the battle half-fought when so much is won. I have letters from publishers on both sides of the sea, and so, may the end of life be swift or slow, I may be found at this work. Into such pleasant life but one hurt—the old wound at Shiloh.

“Soon as the new secretary arrives, I shall begin preparation for home; by which I mean getting a lecture on Turkey started, some pictures of Prince’s Islands for a magazine article, and photographs of the fountains of Stamboul for another article—all to be written under the beech-trees.

“My return will be by steamer to Naples or Trieste. I shall never be caught in Europe between Vienna and Varna again. At Rome I shall arrange for *Il Pensiero*, which I must have for the ideal study. The cholera only will change my programme.”

“March 10, 1885.

“March 4th has come and gone. We have a new president. The newspapers of this city noticed the event, and gave exactly seven lines to the revolution as our English cousins call it. See how important our influence is! What incense to our national vanity! I did not forget the fact. At twelve o’clock, March 4th, according to my Santa Fé nickel chronometer, the regulator of the world’s time, I sent John to the telegraph office with the telegram, ‘The president will please consider my resignation respectfully tendered.’ At this date I have no answer. Nor was one to be expected so soon. In the hurly-burly, and swash of the waves of office-seekers around the White House, what is the mission to Constantinople?

“I have heard of two applicants for this place, and presume the two will now be multiplied many times. I have been deeply gratified by the action of our missionaries in Turkey. They have forwarded a memorial for presentation to Mr. Cleveland, asking that I may not be recalled, or if



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

a successor must be, that the appointee may be a person in sympathy with their work. I hold this a high compliment, and a reward worth working for.

"The *Quinnebaug*—what a name for a ship!—arrived at this port, and is at anchor off Dolma Baghtche palace. The captain called on me in the afternoon, while I was at the Sublime Porte, to interview my quondam friend Said Pasha, the grand-vizier. I must make haste to return the visit. By-the-way, he comes under orders to take me down the Syrian coast, if I wish to go. I might be tempted if I did not know how a stranger crowds their narrow quarters, and, as the voyage is left to my discretion, I shall not see Smyrna, Beirut, or Jerusalem as the guest of Captain Ludlow."

"March 28, 1885.

"A telegram from Washington to the Sublime Porte announces that Mr. S. S. Cox has been appointed minister to Turkey—an excellent one. All very well, but no reply yet to my letter of resignation. The great men of the capital move slowly. How the soles of applicants for office are being roasted on the gridiron of expectancy! I watch the papers carefully, and when I can start home is yet an unanswered question. It depends somewhat on Mr. Cox's movements.

"Yesterday the sultan sent a gorgeous individual in barbaric gold to tell me I was wanted at the palace to-day at twelve o'clock. I don't know what the business is, if business it be. He has been much exercised over the Egyptian question. He is threatened on all sides, and the conduct of Mr. Gladstone is most extraordinary. He seems unconscious of the fact that he may be forcing the Turks, of whom there are about thirty-five millions, with fighting force of about one million, into the arms of the Russians.

"Our spring hangs fire. It keeps dark and gloomy and invites to suicide. Once in long whiles the sun peeps out, but, as if ashamed of such rashness, goes back into hiding. It has been so fully a month."

“April 7, 1885.

“The city is much agitated just now over the sickness of a young Swedish prince. With a brother, he came here eight or ten days ago from Palestine, where he had contracted typhoid fever. He is said to be at death’s door. The king and queen, his parents, will arrive to-day, and up at Yildiz there will be nothing but ‘king and prince’ played for days to come.

“Affairs in my office move slowly. Out of regard for my successor, I refrain from giving direction to new business. He might not agree with the views I take, or the modes resorted to, and that would be embarrassing.

“Nothing yet of my tender of resignation. I cannot understand it, and my impatience grows with the passage of days. I have written the department, requesting if the new minister does not reach the city by the last of this month, that my recall be telegraphed at that time or sooner. The effect will be, at least, to put me right on record, and establish that I am not ‘hungry and thirsty’ for office.”

#### LETTER TO MRS. J. M. LANE

“CONSTANTINOPLE, April 11, 1885.

“MY DEAR JOAN,—I concluded a letter, or rather note, yesterday with the news that at 3.30 P.M. I was going to a reception given by the King of Sweden and Norway to the diplomatic corps, and a promise that I would give you a description of it.

“To bring it about *en règle*, the dean of the corps, Count Corti, the Italian ambassador, sent around a collective note stating the time and place of the ceremony, and announcing that the dress would be *redingote et cravate noir*—frock-coat and black necktie. We dressed accordingly, and appeared promptly on time at the place of the Swedish legation, M. d’Ehrenhoff, minister, where the king and queen were in attendance on their sick son. The entire diplomatic body were present. Outside there was a crowd densely covering the whole Grand Rue, with a battalion of police to keep order.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"I was shown into a large reception-room handsomely furnished, and was kept waiting, with my colleagues, for quite half an hour, during which his majesty employed himself at the lunch-table, a very amusing occupation if he was hungry. At length it was announced, 'His majesty is coming.' We ranged ourselves in one rank facing the door of entry, each in his place from left to right according to rank. This put the dean first, and flung me about the middle of the line, furnishing me a good opportunity to take lessons.

"Very soon a tall man, quite six feet two inches, appeared, crossed the hall, and entered with a dash. As he came in front of the corps, he gave a bow, accompanying it with a long sweep of the right arm in salutation, and retired into an adjoining room.

"His grand chamberlain remained outside, and, at a signal from him, Count Corti moved out first. Upon opening the door and seeing the king, he stopped and made a low bow. Advancing to the royal receptionist, and taking the hand offered him, he made another bow; then the door closed upon the two, and the word passed down the line of diplomats, '*Chacun pour soi.*' And so it proved. One by one we were admitted, and were given about five minutes' audience.

"When my turn came, the chamberlain informed the king who I was, and beckoned me to enter. I bowed at sight of the tall man, who advanced and gave me his hand, at which I bowed again. He addressed me in very good English, but rather slowly, and with the air of one listening to a prompter hid behind the scenes. I have noticed that as the air one always puts on who is interpreting his thought as he speaks.

"He said he heard I had resigned. I answered, 'Yes.' He thought our custom of changing diplomatic officials a bad one. When the government was well represented, the incumbent should stay as long as he pleased to do so. I replied he had described my case exactly. I had stayed till I was impatient to return home. He asked if the

minister at his capital would be changed. Yes, the appointee was already named. He seemed surprised. Mr. Thomas, he said, was a great favorite at his court. He performed his duties most acceptably, and spoke the language fluently. 'Besides,' he added, 'I especially requested that he might remain with us.' 'Your majesty has paid my countryman a high compliment. The sultan has been pleased to propose the same thing for me, but I have declined the kindness. The truth is, I am tired of living so long away from home.'

"He went back to his first statement, that the policy of removals without cause was a bad one. Changing the subject, he said, 'From your title, I infer you are, or have been, in the army?' I answered that my title was won in the field. 'That is much to your credit,' he remarked. Then I took the initiative by saying, 'I hear the prince is much better to-day, and venture to assure your majesty that you have my earnest sympathy.' He took my hand and shook it warmly. 'Thank you! thank you!' And thinking that was a good place to retire, when he dropped my hand, I began moving backward—*exit*, and down went the curtain—the play was over. I shook hands with such of my colleagues as remained, and departed.

"The king was dressed in a frock-coat, black like his vest, light pantaloons, and, sadly for the received idea of royal personages, he carried no baton and wore no crown. A very tall man, of high carriage, pleasant oval face, good forehead, straight nose, thin, gray hair—and that was all. Even kings in this age bow to the democracy. That is the lesson of the hour.

"Your note, marvellously small, was very welcome. I made note of the request it contained. You may rely upon it that I will get the small gold ring marked 'Roma' and the St. Cecilia with her harp and heavenly look.

"The friends inquire for you often, and I always assume to give them your love.

"Against my home-coming, let me sign myself, as always,

"Your brother, most truly, LEW WALLACE."



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

TO MRS. SUSAN E. WALLACE

"April 14, 1885.

"I am packing for my departure, which cannot be much longer delayed. It is now impossible to determine upon a route. The uncertainty marking the relations between England and Russia throws all calculation into doubt. It is presumable that Russian cruisers, in case of war, will make themselves numerous upon the Atlantic. The track of the great steam-packets between Liverpool and New York will offer special inducements to the enemy; the prize-money derivable from one of the Cunarders captured would be a handsome bait. To be captured would be very inconvenient to a passenger though ever so neutral. Where the vessel would be sent, *quien sabe?* Any port would be better than the bottom of the sea; none would be so attractive and sedative as New York. I am very impatient to get off, and my interest in the office is absolutely dead. Overruling of the instructions of the former secretary of state by the new one has already begun, leaving me in the condition when *ne faire rien* is the only policy offering me a glimmer of safety.

"I have been visiting the Azarians at Prinkipo; entertained delightfully, and at the same time have tried to collect material for an illustrated article on the islands of the Marmora. In this project I think I have succeeded. At this season the historic isles are exquisitely beautiful. The air is so sweet and fresh, the water of the sea so blue and dreamy, vegetation already far advanced, and the cloudless nights without a sound. I slept through them without a break, no howling of dogs or yelping of puppies to disturb a dream, nor did I have one. A good chance to give myself up to the Christmas paper, 'The Boyhood of Christ,' and I have made use of it. How a subject does grow under one's hand! Actually there is scarcely a limit to the theme. What to choose in the mass of material, not what is there to write, is my trouble now.

"The last steamer from Varna brought a letter of recall,

## LEW WALLACE

the one I have so long been waiting for. It is very courteous, announces the appointment of my successor, and ends by requesting and hoping I will stay in Constantinople until shortly before Mr. Cox's arrival. The same mail brought a most agreeable letter from the incoming minister himself.

"In these last days I want to get about and do a little final sight-seeing. Broussa remains unvisited, and Mr. Pears is pressing me to take a trip with him to the famous city of Nicea; and the proposal is very tempting. From his account there is another illustrated article for *Harper's* in it."

"UNITED STATES LEGATION, *May* 15, 1885.

"Look at the heading over the date and study it, for this is the last time I shall ever use it. I am no longer minister plenipotentiary, and how it came about I will explain. I have waited for my final audience with the sultan, and have had the disappointment of three postponements; but yesterday I actually had it. When it was set for Friday, Turkish Sunday, the day of leisure even to the overworked sultan, I knew it would come off; and when the time was appointed after *Selimlik*, I knew the sultan was proposing to give me the whole afternoon. So promptly was I on time that my carriage followed his body-guard up the hill to the palace. I was bound the opportunity should not slip. Mr. Gargiulo was my only attendant, the audience being strictly private. I should have taken the new secretary, but it was not in order.

"Our arrival being announced, the sultan asked if we had lunched, and, receiving a negative reply, he ordered a table to be set, and that immediately after luncheon I should be conducted to him. He also sent some genuine Havana cigars in way of delicate hint to take things easy and not hurry him too much. So with Munir Pasha, grand master of ceremonies, and the second chamberlain to keep us company, we ate heartily and cooled off with strawberries and cream, and very delicious they were. We finished our cigars before the messenger announced

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

his majesty was waiting. I put on sword and chapeau, being in full uniform, and followed the grand master out into the garden, now radiant with roses and the bloom of trees. After a little walk over towards the sacred limits of the harem, whose latticed windows no glance could penetrate, we were led to a carriage and driven to one of the new kiosks, beautifully situated in a new garden, which the one man absolute ordered in February last, and lo, it is finished—flowers, lake, cascades, old trees, rockeries, fountains, and house—the triumph of a regiment of workmen under intelligent direction. There we found the sultan.

“Now I had all along been saying to myself that I should be able, after my last interview with him, to say whether his professions of good-will and affection for me were genuine or merely diplomatic. I am prepared with my judgment. I believe thoroughly that he really and unaffectedly likes me, and that the sentiment is of one man towards another for whom he has more than ordinary esteem. After shaking hands with me, he remained standing, to give me opportunity to get the business of the occasion finished. So I said, quietly and without show of oratory, that I had the honor to deliver my letter of recall as envoy extraordinary, and as his majesty had chosen to have it in private audience, I understood it to be his wish that there be no ceremony; would he be pleased to accept it now? He replied: ‘It was my wish to have the letter unceremoniously, for you must understand I regard you as more than minister. Since I have been on the throne, no foreigner has come to me officially, or in private capacity, for whom I have had the friendship I have for you. If you look back over our relation in the years you have been here, you must see that I am speaking the truth in earnest. I find it difficult to part with you, would like you to remain with me, and have already offered you honorable service. I regret you declined the offer, but it is natural you should prefer life in your own country.’ Here he took the sealed letter from me, and turned and

## LEW WALLACE

gave it to the grand master. Sitting down, he signed me to sit also. 'How long will it take you to reach home?' he asked. 'I could get to New York,' I replied, 'in eighteen days, but the programme I have marked will require more time.' 'You will be home in June, then?' 'Yes, your majesty.' 'Well, I want, when you reach America, that you shall keep me informed of what you are doing and where you may be. There are a great many things I shall require from your country, and I will intrust commands to you. Write to me at least once a month.' 'Through whom shall I write?' 'Address me through Osman Bey, my first chamberlain. I have the greatest confidence in him.'

"After I had promised, he went into a long conversation on subjects without special interest to me. When that was concluded, he addressed himself to the interpreter, who finally said, 'His majesty is asking if, now that you are out of office, he can offer you a decoration?' I replied: 'The law is no longer in the way. I am free to accept the honor.' That part of the ceremony was accordingly arranged.

"Then I said: 'I thank your majesty for the magnificent album of photographs I received a few days ago. I beg, however, you will permit me to make one remark about it.'

"He nodded assent.

"In looking through the album I failed to find the photographs of your majesty's children. I have despaired of ever having the picture of your majesty. I would like to give my wife some pictures of your family.'

"I will see to that,' he answered.

"Then, after being told I would leave next day, Saturday, he said: 'No, you must wait till Tuesday, for I want you to come on Monday and dine with me. I will have the princesses and the princes at the table, and the princess shall give you the picture with her own hand.'

"So there is one more delay, for there is nothing to do but consent and 'be happy.'



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"The album, or rather portfolio, is a splendid collection of photographs of Yildiz and its park, the chain of palaces along the Bosphorus, and the old Seraglio Point of Stamboul. The cover is in purple velvet illumined with gold. A duplicate was presented to the Queen of Sweden.

"It is quite evident to me that the sultan is in great trouble. In the conference of the powers now in session, there is wide divergence of views between the delegates. If, on the basis of the *status quo ante*, they patch up an arrangement, behind it stands a list of questions very ugly and threatening to the Porte. Whatever the arrangement may be, it must be temporary, and expedient to float Europe over a current. All this Abdul Hamid sees clearly. Meantime he is massing a mighty army on the European shore of the Bosphorus, and to support this the strain on his resources is tremendous. He has now under arms about four hundred and fifty thousand men. In this situation he cannot divert a piaster from the main object, nor listen to proposals of business not relating to his own interests."

General Wallace's parting gift to the sultan was a dog, of which he has given this account in a letter to his son:

"CONSTANTINOPLE, TURKEY, *February* 14, 1885.

"MY DEAR HENRY,—The sultan is driven by business every hour of the day and a great part of the night. . . . Harassed as he is, it is a question in my mind if the sword of Othman, hanging on the walls of the mosque at Eyoub, would be worth wearing. It brings the sovereign no peace, no rest. But that is not what I want to tell about.

"It is curious that I forgot to say anything of the dog which his majesty asked me to get for him. Now to the report:

"I spent four days in London doing nothing but looking at dogs. As you know, it is the greatest dog market in the world, just as England is the greatest horse, sheep, and cattle market—I mean, of course, for specialties in the way

## LEW WALLACE

of blooded stock. I'd like to know what kind of a dog I did *not* see in those four days. The dealers brought to the Langham every species I had ever heard of—and many more, too. The specimens ranged from a King Charles spaniel, so small you could easily put him in your overcoat-pocket, up to a boar-hound, big as a year-old burro.

“The prices asked were simply amazing—and in most instances they were the actual market-prices, running as high as five hundred guineas, or three thousand dollars. The dog I sought was for no ordinary purpose; it was to take care of my royal friend, and to be his intimate, his guardian, his sentinel, his body-guard. Consequently it must have the qualities of strength, faithfulness, good-nature, and courage. My first idea was a St. Bernard. I found this species will not do for the climate of Constantinople—their long hair is against them—and when I came to see a pure blood, he was not so fine-looking as I had imagined.

“I then thought to buy a boar-hound, such as Prince Bismarck keeps to accompany him in his constitutionals, and is always photographed with him. It is an immense brute, in fact.

“When I examined one I shrank away; his face was treacherous and full of malice. He did not seem so much a dog as a dangerous beast of prey. I knew by my own feelings that the sultan would be afraid of him. Then I examined the stag-hounds, being started in that direction by recollection of Sir Walter Scott's friend and boon companion ‘Maida.’ They did not suit at all. They were merely hunting-dogs, and not by any means handsome. They would not do for the beauty-lover of the East; so I gave them the go-by.

“Finally, at the suggestion of a friend who has attended the bench shows of the city for a couple of years past, I sent for English mastiffs. The first one brought me was about two years old, and he had the recommendation of having taken the first prize for the United Kingdom; and I must say he was the most magnificent creature of his kind I have ever seen. I wanted him at sight; but how

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

much? I asked. Only five hundred guineas! I shut my eyes and ordered him off.

"The dealer then said he had one of his sons, perhaps eight months old, which he would sell for a much less sum. I had the puppy brought and closed the bargain at once. A finer dog I never saw. He has a head like a lion's, a body to correspond, is quite thirty-six inches high already, and measures, from point of tail to muzzle, over six feet. His color is exactly that of a lioness. His face below the eyes is black as ink, so is his mouth.

"A crowd gathered in the portico of the hotel to see him. One man climbed to a window on the outside and looked in, suggesting a burglar or thief. The dog saw his head; his eyes reddened; all the hair on his back stood up straight, and I never heard a growl so *basso profundo*. It was a fine exhibition of nature. I took to him at once, paid the money, and had him sent express, by sea, to Constantinople.

"He came safely a few days after I landed, and was taken immediately to the sultan, who had already despatched several messengers to ask about him. He is in clover, and his master is delighted with 'Victorio.' When Mehemet, the *cavass*, took the dog to the palace every one in the reception-room gave a glance and then ran, 'It is a lion,' they said. At last accounts he was playing with the little princess, and, it is said, the sultan is getting acquainted with him.

"You think the price a large one to give for a dog; and so it is. It would buy an excellent horse at home. But it was to be a present; I remembered the beautiful order offered to me, the Arab horses—which the law forbids my acceptance—the jewels I may not receive. Better to forget his imperial majesty had asked for a dog than to bring him a second-rate animal.

"So much for the gift, which was a pleasant thing on both sides. With love to all,

"Your father, most affectionately,

"LEW WALLACE."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ladies' Home Journal*.

## LEW WALLACE

In a letter to his sister-in-law, Mrs. J. M. Lane, General Wallace wrote of *The Prince of India*, for which he had been collecting and preparing material during his residence in Turkey:

"When I wrote *Ben-Hur* I kept constantly before my mind the thought that the subject had received more deep and thorough study from the greatest scholars than any other I might have chosen. I had to guard against even the smallest mistakes in the manners and customs of the nations of whom I spoke, especially of the Jews. I had to fix every date, certify every surrounding, and deal with things divine as well as human. It has also required an immense amount of patient investigation and close observation to produce the *Prince of India* as it went into the publisher's hands.

"*The Prince of India* is the title assumed by the Wandering Jew. It is the name he takes on his first appearance in Constantinople. He is the active agent, the *Deus ex machina* of the story. He deals with men as he lists and brings about the catastrophe. I conceive that his more than fourteen centuries of life, spent in every corner of the globe, have enriched him with more than human attributes of knowledge, learning, foresight, with more than human ability for dealing with men and with affairs. He plays with kings and kingdoms, with authorities civil and ecclesiastical. For his own purpose he assumes the Christian religion and appears in papal Rome, or the Mussulman, and takes part in the pilgrimage to Mecca. This gives me a vast canvas on which to use my brush, and an infinite variety in the way of color. Further, the characteristics of the period enable me to suffuse the whole with a romantic atmosphere. Chivalry, which was on the decline in the West, was still in the ascendant in the East. The methods of modern warfare had not yet superseded the more picturesque features of ancient battle. Knights in armor course through my pages, feats of individual valor and personal prowess enliven them. It is true that Constantino-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

ple was finally reduced by means of artillery. Indeed, the siege is memorable, among other things, for the fact that it furnished the first instance in history where artillery was used with any notable success. It was to the superiority of their cannon more than to any other one agent that the Turks owed their victory. This fact is brought out. But all my other fighting, in the suburbs or in the surrounding country, is done with the ancient arms of chivalry, and with all the old romantic accessories.

Of his opportunities for observation he wrote:

“When I was appointed United States minister to Turkey in 1881, by General Garfield, I had the idea of a future novel in my mind. I therefore made a study of Orientalism. I learned all I could of their intrigues, their statecraft, their valor, their home life. In my official capacity I had access to the Turkish archives, and was enabled to verify any historical facts I might wish to use. I have been engaged upon the book more or less ever since I retired from the post of minister. Whatever may be the verdict of the public upon it, I think I may claim that it will be a lifelike delineation of the people and of their country, and a true presentation of their history at that period.”

In a brief comment upon the Turks, he gave this account of their love of display and the training of their cavalry:

“It is a strange land. They are an odd race, these Turks. The sultan has a perfect passion for a uniform. You are perhaps aware that as we Americans have no court-dress, the ministers to foreign countries who have a right to an army suit are obliged to wear it upon all diplomatic occasions. I wore my major-general’s dress while at the grand parade when the sultan was going to prayer. He goes once a week to the nearest mosque, escorted by

a squad of his best soldiery, formed in a hollow square, richly caparisoned, with a band of music and all the pomp and state possible. Men uncover their heads and women lower their parasols as he passes, every one being required to show him the greatest homage. Upon one of these occasions my uniform caught the royal rider's eye, and he despatched a soldier to request my attendance, which request was, of course, promptly obeyed. I was once invited to go with him to a drill of his household troops. The old Eleventh Indiana could beat his infantry, but the performance of his Circassian cavalry was something extraordinary. Four companies, magnificently mounted, were in line. A bugle-call, and the right company dashed through to the front, full speed. Another call, and there was a beautiful feat. Each man reached out with his right hand, caught the rein close to the bit, pulled hard, and threw his horse flat on his left side, dismounting as he did so. Then, on the ground beside his horse, he began firing as a skirmisher. A third call, and they rose up with their horses, retreating at full speed, reforming as they went. I tell you it was worth seeing.

"The Turkish cavalry is admitted to be the finest in all Europe. The Circassian body-guard of the sultan was called by Russell, of the London *Times*, 'the most picturesque scoundrels in the world.' They are blood-thirsty and treacherous, recklessly brave and exceedingly beautiful. Even among the meanest of them you see noble, well-set heads of finest mould, testifying to unmixed blood of the most perfect of living races.

"It is one of the great sights, that procession when the sultan goes to prayer. The ranking officers of the army and navy in full uniform, with jewelled orders and decorations, wait at the entrance. The commander of the faithful wears the uniform of an army officer, without ornament other than a slight dress-sword. His bearing is kingly, his face thin and colorless, eyes black and keen as a falcon's. He rides a milk-white Arabian, which he manages with skilful and delicate hand. His manner is

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

very gracious, and as he bows right and left to his people, we can readily believe that this uncontrolled master of fifty million subjects has so kind and gentle a nature that he has never signed a death-warrant. He enters the mosque with one imam to offer the prayer which none but he dare offer, but the stay within is short. He reappears in half an hour, the proud steed is mounted, the guards close about him, the multitude cheer, and the immense crowd breaks away.

“Those sights please the eye and gratify the curiosity. But the very thought of the American shore has power to quicken the beating of my heart and start the tears to my eyes. I am glad that I have had the opportunity to travel and learn a little of other lands, but if my life has taught me anything, it is that our own is the best, the freest, the happiest one beneath God’s sunshine — worth living for and worth dying for, too, whenever the need arises.”

TO SUSAN E. WALLACE

“HOTEL COSTANZI, ROME, *May 29, 1885.*

“I left Constantinople on the 20th instant, and after a voyage to Brindisi, so pleasant that I almost regretted its conclusion, landed, and took the train on the 24th for Naples, arriving there at ten o’clock at night. Because we had been there before, I went to the Hotel Nobile, where I was in very comfortable quarters. My intention was to remain in that city one day, as you and I had concluded there was really nothing in it for us; but Fletcher found me, and undertook to show me what a mistake we made, and I confess he did so. Instead of one day, I stayed three and a half days, and every hour of the time was a pleasure. We did not go out of the city, not to Pompeii or Vesuvius. In the world there is no interior equal, for gorgeous decoration, to the old Carthusian monastery, St. Martin’s, on the hill behind the Hotel Nobile; nor is there any view approaching the Bay of Naples as seen from the outlook-ing balconies of the same St. Martin’s. I tore myself away

## LEW WALLACE

to come here, even to Rome. With half a pretext I might be tempted to go back and do Amalfi, Sorrento, Ischia, and Capri. If you were not waiting for me, there is no telling what folly I might be lured into doing in Naples.

"I enclose a letter of Fletcher's, published in the *American Register*, giving an account of the Pompeiian festival at which they reproduce the old Roman chariot-race, familiar to me only by study and imagination. It must have been most interesting.

"Tuesday morning, before I sailed from Constantinople, the sultan sent his parting compliments and the oft-refused present, which now can be accepted. It was the Imperial Decoration of the Medjiedie, founded by Sultan Abdul Medjid in 1852, and after the Crimean campaign conferred on numerous British officers. It has five classes, differing in size and value, the design in each being a silver sun of seven triple rays, with the device of the crescent and star alternating with the rays. On a circle of red enamel in the centre of the decoration is the legend in Turkish, whose signification is: Zeal, Honor, and Loyalty, and the date, 1268, the Mohammedan year corresponding to 1852; the sultan's name is engraved on a gold field within the circle.

"The first three classes suspend the badge round the neck from a narrow red ribbon bordered with green, and a star closely resembling the order is worn on the left breast. The Grand Cordon, a broad red ribbon with green border, is worn from the right shoulder across the breast, and is fastened at the left side with a rosette.

"You remember the Grand Cordon worn by the Turkish officers at the *Selimlik*, and by certain ambassadors. Here is the letter, in translation, which came with the gift.

" ' YILDIZ PALACE.

" ' General Wallace, late United States minister plenipotentiary, having won a great place in our esteem, in order that he should carry away with him a proof of it, I have invested him with my Imperial Decoration of the Med-



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

jiedie, First Class. In consequence of which, this my high *béret* has been delivered to him, on the 3d of Shabban, in the year of the Hegira, 1302.

“By Christian calendar, May 18, 1885.

“(Signed), HADJI ALI.

“Second Chamberlain to his Imperial Majesty,

“Sultan Abdul Hamid.’<sup>1</sup>

“Besides there was a purple velvet casket which sprung open at a touch, and lo! a cigarette-box about as large as a lady’s card-case. It is made of pure gold, and the lid is set with twenty solitaire diamonds. A border on the rim and the Sultan’s initials, S. H., in the centre, are made of less diamonds. My answer you find enclosed:

“HOTEL LUXEMBURG, CONSTANTINOPLE, May 19, 1885.

“EXCELLENCY,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of souvenirs remitted by his imperial majesty through you, being the Decoration of the Medjiedie, First Class, and a cigarette-case of gold set with jewels. I also pray you to have the goodness to deliver to your august sovereign, his imperial majesty, the sultan, my appreciation of his generosity so delicately and beautifully conveyed, leaving me to know as of absolute assurance that he holds me high in his esteem. The souvenirs will be retained in my family forever.

“Your excellency will have the goodness to accept assurances of my high consideration.

“LEWIS WALLACE,

“Late United States Minister to Turkey.’

“These things have been a care to me ever since. I have no place to store them better than my old shaky trunk, too frail to keep a moth out, much less a thief. One of our R. R. ‘smashers’ would make splinters of it by the watch; and then, horror of horrors! I have visions of a broad green and red ribbon, two stars of clean white silver in exquisite filigree, a gold box and twenty solitaire dia-

<sup>1</sup> The word Abdul means beloved.

monds, all flung together, rolling loose and at odds and ends upon a filthy floor. The thieves happy, and I—well, I hope it will not happen! But I shall feel easier when these costly trinkets are safe in bank, or in your hands, just as safe.

"I obeyed your injunction while in Naples, and bought two of the water-colors you so admired, and took the liberty of adding another larger and quite good in oil. Then Fletcher gave me an unfinished head of a Madonna, very pretty—four in all. My *Pensiero*, which Marion Crawford has undertaken to contract for me, is not quite finished.

"I will stay in Rome several days and finish my Christmas article for the Harpers. I have carried it forward to a point when it became necessary to study some pictures in the Vatican. They are here, and now my work will be easy, and have the quality of certainty and no mistake.

"Tell Margaret I have something pretty for her, my last purchase in the bazar at Constantinople."

"ROME, June 7, 1885.

"As yet I have done no calling. My time is occupied with the Christmas article for *Harper's Magazine*, 'Boyhood of Christ,' which I am bent on taking home complete and ready for submission. My spare time is given to the galleries, looking for illustrations. The more I see of them the more I am struck with the sameness of the pictures. It is positively wearisome to pass them in review; especially is this true of the religious subjects. The Madonnas are conventional; the Christs are all old babies. Fashion seems to have governed the masters. Raphael grows on me, and he is the only one who does. What an amazing genius he had! Occasionally I have gone down to see how the workmen are getting on with my *Pensiero*. It is at last finished and paid for. It is perfectly satisfactory, and will be if I can only get it home complete. The dealer assures me he can pack it so as to make it perfectly safe. But alas, he is not acquainted with the American baggage-smasher!

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"This city is in excellent sanitary condition. The streets are swept and kept clean as the deck of a ship. It looks as if an epidemic can find no lodgment.

"Day after to-morrow I will go over to Florence, which is represented as like a heated oven. A couple of days will do me there, then I shoot to Paris. This is not intended as a letter. It is merely to tell that I am alive and here. This evening I will call on the Storys. . . .

"I open the envelope to say I have just returned from seeing a military review. Through the kindness of young Rogers, I had a window which brought me within thirty feet of Queen Margherita. She is quite beautiful, with blond hair waving, and dreamy blue eyes. The king was the reviewer, and with all his trappings did not look kingly in the least. The display, however, was fine."

XIV

The speech at Wingate—Address to the cadets of the Naval Academy—A second offer from the sultan declined—Offer of mission to Brazil declined—*Life of Harrison*—Dramatization of *Ben-Hur*—Conclusion.

IN the presidential campaign of 1888, General Wallace was asked by the national Republican committee to deliver speeches at Chickering Hall, in New York, and at the Auditorium, in Chicago. Both invitations were declined, but he did consent to speak for the farmers in his own county, many of them old friends and neighbors. They fully appreciated the discrimination made in their favor. The meeting was held near the village of Wingate, and in spite of bad weather a large audience was present. General Wallace chose as his subject his reasons for deserting the Democratic party. It proved to be one of the most effective addresses made that year. A full report was sent by wire to a Chicago morning paper. In less than an hour after the newsboys were calling it in the streets the entire edition was exhausted. It was reprinted in the Sunday issue by request of the committee, and as the Indiana newspapers had failed to report it, a special edition of sixty thousand copies was sent to Indianapolis by special train, every copy of which was sold. There were demands for it from all parts of the country, thousands of copies being ordered by the committees for gratuitous circulation.

The *Life of Harrison* was published as a campaign document also in 1888.



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

General Wallace was a member of the Board of Visitors for West Point in 1890.

In a letter addressed to the board he made many suggestions, the more important of which have since been adopted, among them the extension of the discipline then recommended for the Academy, to the whole army; similar examinations for enlistment, including proofs of good character; a term of enlistment for five years; courses of instruction with officers as teachers; recitation-rooms, text-books for practice, and illustration of studies provided by the government for every military post; with heavy penalties for officers requiring menial duties from enlisted men, or manual labor not strictly within line of honorable duty.

At his own request no action was taken, as the reforms were too radical for adoption without proper consideration, but the recommendations were embodied in full in the official report for that year.

In June, 1894, General Wallace, who was a member of the Board of Visitors, delivered the following address to the graduating class at the Naval Academy, Annapolis:

“GENTLEMEN OF THE ACADEMY,—The Board of Visitors, of which I have the honor to be a member, are unwilling, after witnessing your many varied and excellent performances, to separate without a direct expression of the interest you have excited in them. They have, therefore, selected me to speak in their behalf as well as my own.

“Let me begin, gentlemen, with a confession. I am not unconscious of my years. Their weight is upon me; yet I remember the days of my youth, when the making of life was my most sacred privilege. And looking backward now, I tell you soberly there is nothing in life so beautiful as manly youth. A sound philosophy forbids me envying you its possession; at the same time, did I envy

you, there would be much reason for it. Speaking representatively, I am more than your friend, more than your comrade. I am your lover; and loving you is but loving our country.

"I said did I envy you there would be much reason in the envy. Do not treat the utterance too lightly. Do not dismiss it as an idle compliment. Hear me first. Supposing distinction your ultimate aim, it is not in these days enough that you are favored with health, strength, education, and all the physical and mental graces of which superiority is compounded. No man ever was, no man ever will be great, except he have the opportunities to manifest himself. Here is why you move me so greatly. When you pass out the door yonder, look up thankfully, then look down and be glad, for at your feet there begins a road lined with opportunities exclusively yours; and, I caution you, so thickly will that road be found strewn with opportunities, that if you run your races undistinguished among your fellow-men, fail not, as you love justice, to exonerate the government which has so enriched you with its paternal 'God-speed.'

"Now, gentlemen, it were very unwise, not to say unfair, to tell you of the opportunities with which the course, beginning at the door yonder, is strewn for you, and stop there. Allow me to explain. Let say what will, the American press has one virtue which, in my judgment, quite redeems its every fault. It makes haste on the appearance of evil to give us instant warning. Take up any respectable paper, read it, and, strange as it may sound and seem, a revolution is upon us; and if we ask the end of it, or what will be left after its passage, the last of the prophets died long ago. Of this much we are certain: Fighting has begun, and both the government and society are threatened. Accept the suggestion and think about it, and presently some of the opportunities within my meaning will arise and shape themselves before you. Indeed, there will be occupation, and plenty of it, for those of you who do not go to sea.

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Next, to such of you as do go to sea. Be you also of good cheer; though the sea is pathless, the winds that make their playgrounds on it will be found alive with chances of distinction and good service.

"It were useless denying that up to the present the army has been more a favorite with our people than the navy. I have belonged to it in two wars, and deny now the slightest wavering in my loyalty to its dead and living, to its Scotts and Taylors, its Grants and Sheridans, more especially to the mightier host of unprofessionals who volunteered in emergencies, and must continue nameless, because they were countless. Wherefore you will not suspect me of a doubtful motive when I declare to you deliberately that the day is near, if it have not already arrived, when the navy is to transcend the army in popular favor.

"This I think but a rational deduction. The work of the army is done. The Indians are quieted, they are in reservations; with a few exceptions the tribes are turning farmers; the untamables among them are buried with their hatchets; there are no frontiers for them to harry. A sea of settlements has swallowed them; or, if they are again heard of, it will be as voters. So much for the present. Next, what does the future hold for the army? What one promise of glory or popularity or opportunity for either? Will we ever again turn to it for a president?

"Let us first try to unveil what may be for it within our borders. The revolution of which I have spoken is bound to evoke the militia. It is the signal for raising up the despised National Guards for the defence of the states, leaving the Regulars but a well-organized and officered reserve. If occasionally the latter are called out, the victories awaiting them must be victories over mobs. In brief, it looks—and I say it in no spirit of malice—it looks as if henceforth the life of the Regular is to be that of the barracks. In a word, gentlemen, here at home there are no sections to collide with one another, and no occasion

for sections. A loving Providence has so ordered that to insure eternal peace the people have but to smother their demagogues.

"With no prospect of service at home of a kind contributive to glory in sight, let us turn our best searchlight to discover, if possible, what may be offered the army from abroad. No foreign nation is disposed to quarrel with us. They are the dependants, not we. Our resources are immeasurable. We can grow without them. They are not rash enough seriously to invade us. Or, if it pleases you, fancy an invading army disembarked upon our coast. It may amuse you to locate their descent, and, studying our railroad facilities for the concentration of troops, say how far they could penetrate before being overwhelmed like Burgoyne. Passing then to the probabilities of an invasion on our part, we have but two neighbors, Canada and Mexico, and their weakness is their safeguard. We cannot afford to bully them. Or, if they should provoke us beyond endurance, there might be profit—though in one case at least that is doubtful—in the acquisition of territory, but not enough true glory to fill a lady's thimble. In fact, a country more exposed to attack from us than Canada cannot be named. She offers a flank broad as the distance between oceans. One railroad connects her frontiers. To cut it once would work irremediable division. A million men launched at her supporting columns would reduce the conquest to a summer's campaign. With regard to Mexico, she is safe; for it is never to be forgotten that we have taken the republics of the Western World under protection, and are educated to believe our chiefest honor, not to speak of advantage, lies in an honest assertion of the Monroe Doctrine, to the author of which Brazil will this summer erect a monument.

"Turn now from this picture of the future of the army to its corollary relative to the navy. I have not committed myself, you will observe, to an assertion that there will be no more wars; that would be an Arcadian dream. In my judgment one of the greatest of wars, and in many respects



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the most interesting, is just before us. In no other way is it possible to adjust dominion in Asia and Africa. To be sure, we will have no part in it; yet there is no end to the greed of nations, and the Pacific coast from Alaska to the Horn, and the Atlantic coast from the Horn to Halifax, bear temptations more frequent than light-houses. What is the Monroe Doctrine other than a standing challenge to the powers of Europe, singly or in combination? The next ship from Honolulu may bring a cause of war; and, for that matter, the Nicaragua Canal, though but in proposition, is a nest-egg of war. The world at large looks with unloving eyes upon lines of trade in close monopoly. Undoubtedly hostilities will come; they are inevitable; but when come, where will the fighting be? *Mira*, young gentlemen! Behold your opportunities! In that day how many places will need your ships! How often your white squadrons will be looked for from cathedral spires in threatened cities! How many ears will be bent listening for the welcome thunder of your guns in the offing below the water-line! If, after gallant effort, you are beaten, there will be tears for you plenteous as rain; if you are victorious, how you will be welcomed by resolutions unanimously adopted, and by snuff-boxes and swords and canes, and by notes in scented envelopes praying your pictures and autographs! And when you bring your prizes in, look for the army among the spectators gathered on the shore to salute you for dear Old Glory's sake!

“As said, I may not grudge you your youth, or your education, or your happy start in life, or the high hopes aflower in your hearts, or your honorable ambitions; but, as the truth may earn me salvation, I wish with all my soul I were young again and a cadet in the navy. For I do believe the lights which from the beginning have been most alluring to brave men have been transferred from the land to the sea. I do believe that the guns are now fashioned about which you will be called in oft-repeated struggles for renown in life or enduring moments in death.

## LEW WALLACE

"In conclusion, the Board of Visitors bid me declare, young gentlemen, that from what they have seen of the Academy, and the systems prevalent in it, especially from the exhibitions given by the classes, they congratulate your officers and professors, and bid me say they have faith in you all, and wish you farewell."

In January, 1890, General Wallace declined a second offer of service from the sultan, through the Turkish minister in Washington, in the following letter:

"CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA, *January 14, 1890.*

*"His Excellency, M. Mavroyeni, Minister from Turkey to the United States of America :*

"DEAR SIR,—You will pardon me, I hope, for trying your patience in the matter of the inquiries you were pleased to address me in behalf of his imperial majesty, your august sovereign.

"About the time of the receipt of your first letter, I was advised that his majesty had done the great honor of asking if I would accept a place in the palace or at the arsenal, and at what salary. Such a proposal, you will readily understand, could not be lightly treated; indeed, what with the struggle it excited between my wishes and my judgment, seldom, if ever, have I been in such serious straits. With this mention, in the way of apology, I now subject myself to your well-known courtesy, and beg you to have the goodness to cause my reply to his majesty's most gracious tender of honor to be laid at his feet, with every expression of gratitude becoming its appreciation.

"Through your favor, then, I would much like his majesty made aware that as between the places stated, I should greatly prefer one in the palace, since it would seem to offer me more frequent opportunities of service to him personally. Certainly I could in such a position better indulge the affection for him which I brought with me from Constantinople, and which the intervening years

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

have increased rather than diminished. I say this duly mindful of his exalted position and the observances of etiquette attaching thereto.

"There was no trouble in deciding the preference; but when I came to the main question, the consideration was more serious. After much vacillation, it appeared my duty to him, as well as to myself, to ask his permission to decline the gracious proposals altogether. Fifteen years ago it would have been different with me; as it is, I have but a short balance of life to give him. True, I am strong, healthy, and fond of work in-doors and out, loving especially a horse and a gun; yet pronouncing according to reason, and such philosophy as I possess, at sixty-two, my age, every one should begin to think of retirement; at seventy most men under favoring circumstances are pensioners, some upon their own providence, some upon the bounty of others.

"Praying his majesty to remember that, if I am speaking much of myself, his most honorable proposal contains, at least impliedly, an invitation to such freedom. I presume to say, further, that within a year it has fallen to me to decline high positions in the civil service of my own country; in other words, my preparation for retirement from public life is already begun. To which, as of even more specially personal application, nurtured upon his majesty's perfect information, I will add that, while not rich in the ultra-American sense, I am grateful to God for permitting me to be in circumstances to chose my own pursuits, without leave asked except of my own tastes. I have a comfortable home, not lacking in some luxuries, and a study, with pictures and an ample library, and the wife of my youth still abides with me; thus favored, I am given up entirely to literature.

"Now, as I know if I were in private audience his majesty, out of gracious condescension, would ask me about it, he may be pleased to hear that my retirement has a promise of early fruit. I have in hand a book wherein I deal romantically, yet strictly regardful of history, with the



## LEW WALLACE

conquest of Constantinople by his great ancestor, Mahomet II., sultan and emperor. The *morale* of the work is that God the Father, as Christians speak of Him, the Compassionate and Merciful, as He is so beautifully addressed in El Fatihah, is in himself an idea possible of understanding, a faith sufficient for all the peoples of the earth to unite upon in the worship. Around this core the most romantic circumstances I could glean and invent—circumstances of love and war—have been woven, and in course of the story advantage is taken to do justice to the young conqueror of the Greeks. When in Constantinople, I spent many days collecting material for this work, and in the study of localities; withal, however, I regret not being actually on the ground as the composition proceeds. The task, now more than one-third finished, will probably require another year. As a lineal descendant of the conqueror, his majesty cannot be indifferent to such a tale, and may at the proper time incline a willing ear to my request for leave to dedicate it to him.

“In conclusion; along with the declination of the honor his majesty has tendered me, I should be happy to have him notified of my constant readiness to do him all consistent service in my own country. With a lively recollection of his many condescensions and favors in the past, I doubt if the most faithful of the friends about him can have his health, life, and prosperity more at heart than myself. And he was gracious enough to include my wife in his friendly inquiries. Madam Wallace joins me in the acknowledgments I venture to send him, and in wishing that good-fortune and happiness may abide with him and his family forever.

“Your excellency. I have the honor to subscribe myself most respectfully your friend and obedient servant,

“LEWIS WALLACE.”

In the same year he declined the mission to Brazil, tendered him by President Harrison. He wrote to Mr. Blaine:



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

“CRAWFORDSVILLE, *July 2, 1890.*

“*Hon. James G. Blaine, Secretary of State :*

“SIR,—I beg leave to acknowledge receipt of the telegram as follows:

““WASHINGTON, D. C., *June 28, 1890.*

““*General L. Wallace, Crawfordsville, Indiana :*

““The president would be glad to have you accept the mission to Brazil, and I cordially add my desire. The mission is now vacant, and if you accept, it would be well to leave at your earliest convenience.

““(Signed) JAMES G. BLAINE.’

“The tender thus made me was a surprise, to which I hope you will charge the time taken to consider the question of acceptance. I find one great affirmative inducement, a wish to be in some honorable way connected with the Spanish-American commercial policy which has so long engaged your attention, and is now a measure of President Harrison’s administration in fair progress. No achievement of arms possible of conception could bring our countrymen such immensities of good result as that movement accomplished. The mere mention of the opinion must satisfy you how powerfully the offer contained in your telegram warmed my imagination, and with what regret I find myself compelled to decline it.

“Knowing your tenderness of affection, I am sure you will not think worse of me for a statement of the reason of this decision. The voyage is too long for endurance by my wife, and I am determined never to go abroad for residence without my whole family.

“Believe me when I say I have the honor to be most gratefully your friend,

“LEWIS WALLACE.”

*The Boyhood of Christ* was published in book form in 1892.

## LEW WALLACE

It was inscribed as follows:

“DEDICATED  
TO  
THE SOUL OF MY MOTHER.

“In the ultimate Isles of the Blest, she knows all the things whereof this little book proves me to have been only dreaming.”

*The Prince of India* was published by Harper & Brothers in 1893. On the first page of the manuscript is written in pencil:

“Begun September, 1886, on the Kankakee. Finished, 1892, in the tent under the beeches.”

Bishop Newman, of the Methodist Church, wrote:

“A deep and genuine surprise is felt that the author has accomplished the unexpected feat of binding the romance so very closely as he has to the central motive of *Ben-Hur*. Indeed, the sub-title of *Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, might be applied with almost equal accuracy to *The Prince of India*. To all appreciative readers of the older work, the present one will come with the interest of a sequel which is worthy in power and blessing to stand by the side of its great predecessor. General Wallace has done another vast service to Christianity, as well as wrought out a powerful historical romance.”

Of the dramatization of *Ben-Hur*, General Wallace wrote:

“I have always had a fear that whoever should undertake the production dramatically would fail to treat it in the proper spirit of reverence. This is one of the reasons why I have heretofore declined to allow it to go on the stage.

“A number of persons well known in the histrionic

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

world have applied to me for the privilege. Lawrence Barrett was very persistent in his request. The last time I saw him he spent an evening trying to convince me there was in the book a theme for a great play, without trenching upon any of the parts made sacred by the appearance of the Saviour. Still I declined.

"The younger Salvini was also persistent in his requests. He had the idea that he would make an excellent Ben-Hur, and I was of the same opinion.

"The Kiralfys had a prodigious scheme, the main point of which was the chariot-race. They proposed leasing thirty acres of ground on Staten Island, of which two acres were to be reserved and fitted up for that exhibition. I need not speak of their reputation, but, notwithstanding it, I gave them a refusal. The privilege has also been asked of me by playwrights in England and in Germany."

In 1889 the right of dramatization was finally given to Klaw & Erlanger, and the play was produced.

### CONCLUSION

The closing years of the life recorded in these pages were serene and cloudless. The play, *Ben-Hur*, succeeded beyond its author's utmost hope. Two seasons he lectured to large audiences and tasted the sweetness of unstinted praise. The management of his son released him from the vexations of business; the study was built, "a pleasure-house for my soul," as he called it; the little rose-garden bloomed; the grandsons were a delight; the old wound at Shiloh ceased from troubling.

Two silver loving-cups came to him, one from the Grand Army, the other from his Hoosier friends, to

"The knightliest of the knightly race  
That since the days of old,  
Have kept the lamp of chivalry  
Alight in hearts of gold."

## LEW WALLACE

He had in mind the outline of a new novel in which the Prince of India should go from Constantinople to the court of Spain, and sail with Columbus in search of a new world, there to find the end of controversy, to try the universal brotherhood of man, and found the religion of the one God. The jewels Queen Isabella pledged to fit out the vessels for the venture were to be from the tomb of Hiram, King of Tyre.

Like the seer of Israel, his eye was not dimmed, and to the last he dreamed dreams and saw visions, beholding many things that never were, never will be, in a light better than ever shone on sea or land; but nothing an enemy could laugh at, nothing a lover could regret.

A near friend and neighbor, thinking what keepsake he would like for remembrance, said, thoughtfully, "the spectacles General Wallace looked through at the world."

An attack of grip greatly reduced his strength, and he walked slowly into the Valley of the Shadow, fearing no evil still keeping his love of music, flowers, his interest in friends and public affairs. He loved life well, but not so well as to be unprepared to lay it down at the call of the Great Commander. He said he would live it over again willingly just as it was. On the death of an old comrade, he sent the message:

"He is but a day's march ahead of us; we will overtake him soon."

Years before he had written:

"We may not be able to read the future in our palms; but there is no excuse for it if we do not at least see God in them. . . . Animals when called to, the caller being on a height over them, never look for him above the level of their eyes; even so some men are incapable of thinking of



## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

the mysteries hidden out of sight in the sky; but it is not so with all; and therein we behold the partiality of God. Neither on the sea nor on the land nor in the sky is there a wonder like the perversity which impels men to go on inventing religions and sects, and then persecute one another on account of them.

“Strange—most strange! In human history no other such marvel! There has been nothing so fruitful of bickering, hate, murder, and war, the flame of swords and the cruelty of blows—all in God’s name.”

And again:

“Men speaking of dreaming as if it were a phenomenon of night and sleep. They should know better. All results achieved by us are self-promised, and self-promises are made in dreams awake. Dreaming is the relief of labor, the wine that sustains us in the act. We learn to love labor, not for itself, but for the opportunity it furnishes for dreaming, which is the great under-monotone of real life, unheard, unnoticed, because of its constancy. Living is dreaming. Only in the grave are there no dreams.”

February 15, 1905, he bade this world good-night—his dreaming ended.

He has found the New World, the universal religion, the One God.

S. E. W.

*October, 1905.*

# INDEX

- ABBOTT, JOSIAH G., on Florida commission, 908.
- Abdul-Hamid II., Sultan of Turkey, 961, 964, 965, 996.
- Abercrombie, Colonel, at Martinsburg, 310, 318.
- "Agate," pen-name of Whitelaw Reid, correspondent on Cincinnati *Gazette*, 459, 460, 461, 501, 502.
- Alexander, Captain, commanding Maryland Battery, 706, 721, 733, 739, 757, 758, 759, 771, 781.
- Allen, Captain H. S., at battle of Monocacy, 803.
- Allen, Cyrus, party leader, 232, 233.
- American forces at Buena Vista, 166, 167.
- Ammen, Colonel Jacob, commanding Tenth Brigade, Army of the Ohio, 487; extract from diary of, 487, 488; at Shiloh, 536.
- Ampudia, Pedro, at Buena Vista, 106, 169.
- Anderson, John, at Camp Belknap, 122.
- Andersonville prison, Captain Henry Wirz, keeper of, 852, 853, 855, 856.
- Andrade, Manuel, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Andrews, Governor, of Massachusetts, 312.
- Apache Indians troublesome, 916, 918, 919, 920.
- Apple, Colonel, commanding Fifty-third Ohio regiment at Shiloh, 481, 485, 512.
- Arkansas Volunteers, Colonel Gell commanding, at Buena Vista, 166.
- Army of the Mississippi, the, 571.
- Army of the Ohio, the, 478, 487, 536, 545, 562, 573.
- Army of the Tennessee, the, 438, 476, 479, 482, 492, 503, 521, 525, 533, 540, 570, 573.
- Arnold, Samuel, trial of, 848, 849.
- Ashby, Mr., wounded at Patterson Creek, 304 and *note*.
- Assim Pasha, minister of foreign affairs, 960, 961.
- Atzerodt, George A., trial of, 848, 850.
- Auger, General, in command of Department of Washington, 699, 718.
- Avalanche*, the Memphis, 586, 587.
- BAKER, E. N., at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298, 301, 303, 305.
- Baldwin, Colonel, commanding Fifty-seventh Illinois regiment at Fort Donelson, 389, 407.
- Baltimore, General Wallace military governor of, 677.
- Barnard, General J. G., Colonel of Engineers, quoted, 701 *n*.
- Barrett, Lawrence, letter to General Wallace, 900.
- Battery A, Chicago Light Artillery, Captain James Smith, 347, 349, 369.
- Bausenwein, Colonel, commanding Fifty-eighth Ohio regiment at Shiloh, 565.

# INDEX

- Baxter, Captain, on Grant's staff, 463, 464, 466.
- Bayard, Thomas F., on Florida commission, 908.
- Beauregard, General, at Manassas Junction, 277, 308, 316; at Bull Run, 315; attacked by McDowell, 322; at Shiloh, 484, 494, 496, 511, 514; at Corinth, 577, 581.
- Behr, Captain, commanding Morton (Indiana) Battery at Shiloh, 526.
- Belknap, Camp, on the Rio Grande, 121.
- Bell, Horace, scout, 450, 455.
- Belmont, battle of, mentioned, 355 and *note*.
- Ben-Hur*, 158, 895, 911, 921, 923, 924, 926-936, 938, 939, 942, 943, 947-956, 1000, 1001.
- Berdan, Elizabeth, meets F. Marion Crawford, 955.
- Bey, Osman, first chamberlain to the sultan, 960.
- Bey, Pangeris, aide-de-camp to the sultan, 944.
- Bey, Zia, librarian of Robert College, 944.
- Biddle, Colonel, ordered to support Colonel Wallace, 296, 309.
- Bieler, Lieutenant, at Shiloh, 526 and *note*, 527 *n*.
- Bigelow, Mr., marshal of the American legation at Constantinople, 958, 959.
- Bingham, Hon. John A., special judge - advocate for Lincoln commission, 847; argument of, 849.
- Bissell, Colonel, commanding Second Illinois Volunteers at Buena Vista, 167; president court of inquiry, 179.
- Black Hawk War, the, 14.
- Blackford, Judge Isaac, 110, 213.
- Blaine, Hon. James G., quoted, 102 *n*; secretary of state, 999.
- Bliss, Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander, on Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680, 716, 717, 725, 774. "Blood-Tubs," 674.
- Boggs, Major, Seventeenth Virginia Cavalry, death of, 807.
- Bolivia, General Wallace offered mission to, 911, 912.
- Bonaparte, Madame, of Baltimore, 676, 696, 697.
- Bond, Judge, of Baltimore, 676, 679, 683.
- Book on tactics, General Wallace's, 571, 572, 853, 857, 859.
- Booth, John Wilkes, 848.
- Bowles, William H., Colonel Second Regiment, First Indiana Infantry, 116; at Buena Vista, 167, 174 *n*, 177, 178, 183.
- Boyhood of Christ, The*, 2; published, 999.
- Boyle, General, in command of military district of Kentucky, 593, 594, 595, 596.
- Bradford, Governor A. B., of Baltimore, 681, 683, 684.
- Bradley, Justice, on Florida commission, 908.
- Bragg, General, at Buena Vista, 166, 175, 176, 451; at Shiloh, 494, 495, 510, 511, 514; at Chattanooga, 596.
- Brayman, Major, 399, 400, 401.
- Brazier, Thomas, at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298.
- Brazos Santiago, voyage to, 119; General Wallace at, 121, 820, 823, 830, 844, 845.
- Breckinridge, General Cabell, at Corinth, 451; at Shiloh, 495, 521, 537, 538, 539; at Frederick City, 804.
- Brier, Mr. David, candidate for Congress, 225.
- Bright, Jesse D., political "boss," 236, 248, 251.
- Brown, Captain, First Regiment, Maryland, Potomac Home Brigade, at battle of Monocacy, 705, 784, 786, 799, 803.
- Brown, Colonel Allison L., commanding One Hundred and Forty-ninth Ohio National Guard, 705, 706, 734, 775.
- Brown, First Lieutenant George, commanding Ninth Indiana Battery at Shiloh, 541, 542, 546, 548 *n*., 550, 551, 552 and *note*, 554.
- Brown, Fort, hasty erection of,

# INDEX

- 106; killing of Captain Thornton at, 145.
- Brown, S. S., at Monterey, Mexico, 812, 815.
- Buchanan, Mr., mentioned, 242, 248, 249.
- Buckland, Colonel, at Shiloh, 484, 485, 486, 511, 512, 513, 514, 526.
- Buckner, General, at Fort Donelson, 392; message to Grant, 426; meeting with General Wallace, 428.
- Buell commission, 641; opinion of, 646-653.
- Buell, General Don Carlos, 440, 477 *n.*, 478, 493, 494, 503, 520, 525 *n.*, 533, 562, 596, 643, 644.
- Buell, Mrs. Don Carlos, 644.
- Buena Vista, General Wool at, 163; the battle-field at, 164, 165; American forces at, 166; Mexican forces at, 169; description of battle at, 169-176.
- Bull Run, General Beauregard at, 315.
- Burbank, Colonel, at Newport Barracks, 604, 605; at Cincinnati, 618.
- Burkett, Ed., at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298.
- Burnet, Henry L., assistant judge - advocate for Lincoln commission, 847.
- Butler, General Benjamin, at Norfolk, 672, 674, 688; at Washington, 857.
- Butterfield, Colonel Daniel, commanding Twelfth New York, 314.
- CADWALLADER, MAJOR-GENERAL, at Martinsburg, 312.
- Cady, Mrs., presents colors to Eleventh Indiana regiment, 270.
- Cairo, General Prentiss at, 336.
- Camargo, taken by General Taylor, 124, 129, 136, 145.
- Campbell, Professor John L., of Wabash College, 660.
- Camp Chase, General Wallace in command at, 29, 37.
- Camp Clark, General George Rogers Clark at, 116.
- Camp Morton, 266, 268.
- Camp Tod, occupants of, ordered to Minnesota, 637-640.
- Canby, Major-General Edward R. S., name in Wabash College, 42 *n.*; commanding Division of the West Mississippi, 819, 823, 827, 830; Kirby Smith surrenders to, 843.
- Canby, Mrs. Edward S., 34.
- Carondelet*, the, at Fort Donelson, 396 *n.*, 431.
- Carpenter, scout, 450, 456.
- Carvajal, General Jesus Maria, famous guerilla, 145, 147.
- Carvajal, General José M. J., governor of Tamaulipas, 844, 845, 846, 862, 863, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 875.
- Casseday, Major, General Buckner's adjutant-general, 429.
- Cass, Lewis, secretary of war, 94; presidential candidate, 203.
- Castelar, Emilio, congratulates General Wallace, 890.
- Catlin, Lieutenant-Colonel Lynde, on General Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680, 716, 717, 741, 742, 748, 749, 776, 794, 795, 803, 824.
- Cervalvo, church robbery at, 136-142.
- Chalmers, General, at Shiloh, 509, 521, 537, 539.
- Chase, Camp, at Columbus, Ohio, General Wallace at, 629-637.
- Cheatham, General, at Pittsburg Landing, 445, 447; at Shiloh, 533, 536.
- Chetlain, Colonel, in command at Smithland, 366 *n.*
- Christiansen, Colonel, adjutant-general at New Orleans, 818.
- Cincinnati, the "siege of," 603-623.
- "City Greys," the, organized, 93.
- City Point, mentioned, 703, 704.
- Civil war, prospects of, 242, 259, 260.
- Clark, Camp, Indiana regiments assembled at, 116.



# INDEX

- Clark, General George Rogers, at Camp Clark, 116.
- Clay, Cassius M., 598.
- Clay, Henry, 5, 95, 96, 174, 201.
- Clay, Tom, 429 and *note*.
- Cleburne, Brigadier-General, at Shiloh, 513, 514, 521, 525.
- Clemmer, Mary, her description of General Wallace, 199.
- Clendenin, Lieutenant - Colonel David R., commanding Eighth Illinois Cavalry, at battle of Monocacy, 718, 719, 721, 722, 723, 724, 729, 730, 732, 733, 741, 743, 745, 763, 765, 800, 805-807, 818; member of Lincoln commission, 847.
- Cleveland, President Grover, 967, 968, 969.
- Clifford, Justice, on Florida commission, 908.
- Clifton*, the, 820, 832.
- Colfax, Schuyler, political leader, 232, 233, 239, 307.
- Columbus seized by General Polk, 336.
- Comanches, the, efforts to conciliate, 842; become troublesome, 916.
- "Commodus," a tragedy, by General Wallace, 899.
- Conestoga*, the, Lieutenant-Commander Phelps of, 357; at Panther Island, 362; advances upon Fort Henry, 366; at Fort Donelson, 396 *n*.
- Congressional Library, the, comments on, 891.
- Convention, Democratic, of 1856, 248.
- Coombs, Leslie, of Kentucky, 616.
- Cooper, Brigadier-General, commanding district of Indian Territory, 842.
- Cooper, General Samuel, adjutant and inspector general of the Confederacy in Richmond, 841.
- Corinth, scheme to attack, 573; siege of, 576; evacuation of, 581.
- Corona, Antonio, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Corwin, Mr. R. M., at Cincinnati, 615.
- Court of inquiry, the Bowles, report of, 178-181.
- Cox, Hon. S. S., member of Congress, 957, 959; appointed minister to Turkey, 971.
- Cox, Jacob, Mr., painter, 48, 49, 50.
- Cox, Major C. C., on General Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680.
- Crane, Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph G., on Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680, 693.
- Cravens, Major, Second Indiana regiment, 164, 169.
- Crawford, Colonel H. Clay, authorized to procure soldiers for Mexican service, 865.
- Crawford, F. Marion, letter to General Wallace relating to *Ben-Hur*, 954.
- Crisp, Mrs., house of, Grant's headquarters at, 385, 399.
- Crittenden, General Thomas L., witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Crocker, Mr., review of *The Fair God*, 888; of "Commodus," 900.
- Cross, Colonel, murder of, 106.
- Cruft, Colonel Charles, commanding Thirty-first Indiana regiment, 389 and *note*; ordered to the assistance of McClernand, 400; report of battle, 401 *n*., 408.
- Crump's Landing, General Wallace ordered to, 444, 447, 448, 449.
- Cumberland, the Eleventh Indiana regiment at, 283, 290.
- Curtin, Governor of Pennsylvania, 295, 309, 655.
- Daily Journal*, Indianapolis, Wallace engaged as reporter on, 96.
- Dana, Brigadier-General N. J. T., on Buell commission, 642.
- Davidson, Captain, commanding Thirty-second Illinois regiment at Fort Donelson, 407.
- Davis, Brigadier-General E. J., 827; ordered to Brazos Santiago, 830.

# INDEX

- Davis, Colonel, commanding the Forty-sixth Illinois regiment at Fort Donelson, 389, 407.
- Davis, Garrett, United States Senator, 598.
- Davis, Henry Winter, leader of Republican party in Maryland, 675, 683, 684.
- Davis, Jefferson, 123, 167, 178, 253, 271, 494, 581, 832, 837, 838, 843, 848, 857.
- Davis, Lieutenant George E., commanding Tenth Vermont Infantry at battle of Monocacy, 795 and *note*.
- Defrees, Mr. John D., editor of Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, 96; party leader, 232, 233.
- Department of West Virginia, General David Hunter commanding, 702.
- Dewey, Judge Charles, Lew Wallace before, 111.
- Diaz, President Porfirio, 843, 862, 868.
- Dickson, Mr., commanding colored brigade at Cincinnati, 615.
- Dilke, Charles W., congratulations to General Wallace, 890.
- Dix, General John, receives despatch from General Wallace, 823.
- Dix, Paymaster, at Buena Vista, 187.
- Donelson, Fort, built, 337; Colonel Heiman retires to, 373; reinforcements for, 375; Grant marches against, 377; Foote attacks, 394; McClelland attacks, 397-409; surrender of, 426; General Grant at, 432; prisoners taken at, 433; general order No. 6, 438.
- Douglas, Stephen A., chairman Senate committee on territories, 234; "squatter sovereignty," 235, 238; compromise a failure, 242; had support of party in Indiana, 248; debate with Lincoln, 252, 253, 254, 255.
- Dove, Lieutenant, United States navy, 431.
- Drake, James P., captain of Volunteers, 114; elected colonel First Indiana Infantry, 116, 310; visit to General Taylor at Matamoras, 127; snubbed by General Taylor, 131; ordered to Walnut Springs, 136; ordered to return to camp at mouth of Rio Grande, 143, 144; takes command at Matamoras, 145.
- Dred Scott case, the, 241.
- Dufferin, Lord, congratulations to General Wallace, 890, 951.
- Duke, General, quoted, 497, 498, 499.
- Duncan, Robert S., county clerk, 85.
- Dunlap, P. M., at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298, 301, 304.
- Dunlap, Robert, at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298, 305.
- Dunning, Paris C., portrait of, in state library at Indianapolis, 130, 131.
- Dyer, Assistant Adjutant-General, at New Orleans, 823
- EARLY, GENERAL JUBAL, 736, 737, 745, 751, 752, 754, 765, 771, 773, 781, 783, 790, 796, 804, 809, 810.
- Edmunds, George T., on Florida commission, 908.
- Edwards Ferry, Early's lost opportunity at, 754.
- Eighth Army Corps, General Wallace commanding, 668, 673, 677.
- Eighth Illinois Cavalry, Lieutenant-Colonel David R. Clendenin commanding, 400, 718, 722, 729, 730, 732, 733, 741, 743, 745, 763, 765, 800, 805-807, 817.
- Eighth Missouri, Colonel Morgan L. Smith commanding, 342, 347, 348; at Fort Heiman, 380; at Fort Donelson, 387, 434, 435; at Shiloh, 547, 556, 565.
- Eighty-first Ohio at Shiloh, 529.
- Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania,

# INDEX

- Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Stahl, 749, 780.
- Eleventh Indiana Volunteers, Colonel Wallace commanding, 268; in barracks, 296; uniform of, 270; motto of, 272; drills of, 273; ordered to Evansville, 274; ordered to Cumberland, 276; reception at Indianapolis and Cincinnati, 278; arrival at Grafton, 279; at Cumberland, 283, 290; skirmish at Romney, 286; competitive drills, 313, 314; willingness to remain beyond term of enlistment, 322; mustered out, 323; its character, 324; mustered in for three years, 326; ordered to St. Louis, 327; arrival at, 328; transferred to Paducah, Kentucky, 332; George McGinnis appointed colonel of, 346; parting of, with Colonel Wallace, 347; friendly relations with Eighth Missouri, 348; at Fort Heiman, 380; joins General Smith's division at Donelson, 387; joins General Wallace, 434; returned to General Smith, 435; at Shiloh, 547, 559, 565; at Memphis, 586.
- Eleventh Maryland Infantry, Colonel Landstreet, 705, 717, 741, 746, 764, 771, 781.
- Ellet, Colonel Charles, defeat of Confederates by, at Memphis, 585.
- Elston, Major Isaac C., his home at Crawfordsville, 206; lieutenant-colonel, 565; assistant adjutant-general, 639.
- Elston, Miss Susan. *See* Wallace, Susan E.
- Emerson, Colonel William, commanding One Hundred and Fifty-first New York, 748.
- Emory, Major - General, commanding Nineteenth Army Corps at Fortress Monroe, 810.
- Encornacion, Santa Anna at, 160.
- Escobedo, General, Governor of Nuevo Leon, 844, 879.
- Este, Major William M., on General Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680.
- Etchison, Mr., consul, 827.
- Evansville, the Eleventh Indiana regiment at, 274.
- Evans, Robert, early companion of Lew Wallace, 21.
- Evarts, William M., secretary of state, 911.
- Everman*, the, 871, 873, 874, 875.
- FARLEY, LEWIS, at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298, 301, 302, 305.
- Farmington, battle of, mentioned, 578.
- Field, Justice, on Florida commission, 908.
- Fifth Ohio Cavalry, Major Charles S. Hayes, 447, 448, 452, 453.
- Fifty-eighth Illinois regiment, Colonel Lynch, at Fort Donelson, 389 *n.*, 406, 407.
- Fifty-eighth Ohio regiment, Colonel Bausenwein, at Shiloh, 565.
- Fifty-seventh Illinois regiment, Colonel Baldwin, at Fort Donelson, 389, 407.
- Fifty-third Ohio regiment, Colonel Apple, at Shiloh, 481, 485, 499 *n.*, 512.
- First Dragoons, regulars, Captain Steene, at Buena Vista, 166.
- First Illinois Infantry, Colonel Hardin, at Buena Vista, 165, 167.
- First Indiana Infantry, officers chosen for, 116, 117.
- First Mississippi Volunteers, Colonel Jefferson Davis commanding, 123, 167.
- First Nebraska regiment at Donelson, Colonel Thayer commanding, 389, 405, 406, 407; at Shiloh, Colonel W. D. McCord commanding, 565.
- First New York Veteran Cavalry, Major Wells, at Frederick, 729.
- First Regiment, Maryland, Potomac Home Brigade, Captain Brown, at battle of Monocacy, 705, 784, 786, 799, 803.
- Florida commission, session of the, 901.



# INDEX

- Foote, Andrew H., flag-officer, 357 and *note*; at Fort Henry, 367-371; return to Cairo, 374; attacks Fort Donelson, 393; defeat, 394; order of attack, 396; conference with Grant, 399.
- Force, Colonel M. L., commanding Twentieth Ohio at Shiloh, 564.
- Ford, Colonel J. S., Confederate States army, 824, 825, 826, 827, 830, 833, 835, 836, 837, 838.
- Forrest, General, at Shiloh, 523, 584, 585, 596.
- Forty-fourth Indiana regiment, Colonel Reed, 389, 400.
- Forty-sixth Illinois regiment, Colonel Davis, at Fort Donelson, 389, 407.
- Fourteenth Iowa regiment, Colonel Shaw, at Shiloh, 536.
- Fourteenth New Jersey, Lieutenant-Colonel C. K. Hall, 748, 780 and *note*.
- Fourth United States Dragoons, Company I., Lieutenant Powell, 347.
- Frederick, fight at, 729-747, 752.
- Freedman's Bureau, Wallace's, 691 *n.*, 692.
- Free Press*, the, South Bend, 232.
- Frelinghuysen, Frederick T., on Florida commission, 908.
- Frémont, General John Charles, advent in St. Louis, 327, 328; schemes of, 341.
- Fry, Thomas W., surgeon, 347.
- Fugitive slave, the, 358, 359.
- GALEA, ALFONSO MARIA, translates *Ben-Hur* into Italian, 939.
- Garfield, President James A., 685, 908, 939, 940, 941.
- Gargiulo, Mr., counsellor for American ministers, 944, 958, 959, 961, 962, 963, 968, 976.
- Garrett, Mr. John, president of Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, 676, 698, 699, 700, 702, 727, 732, 751.
- Garrison, William Lloyd, abolitionist, mentioned, 232, 240.
- Gell, Colonel, commanding Arkansas Cavalry at Buena Vista, 166; death of, 172.
- General Sheridan*, the, arrival of, at Matamoras, 870, 872.
- Gerber, Lieutenant-Colonel, death of, at Shiloh, 559.
- Gilpin, Colonel Charles, commanding Third Maryland, Potomac Home Brigade, 705, 721, 724, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 799.
- Gladstone, Mr., mentioned, 971.
- Glasscock, Dempsey, justice, 220, 221.
- Gobernador, Palacio del, described, 913.
- Gordon, General John B., 770 *n.*, 771 *n.*
- Gorman, Major, of Third Indiana regiment, 184.
- Granger, General Gordon, witness before Buell commission, 615, 622, 645.
- Grant, Ulysses S., at City Point, 335; commanding military district of Cairo, 337; visit to Paducah, 351, 352, 353; fights the battle of Belmont, 355; first test of capacity, 367; holds council of war, 376; unpleasantness between, and McClelland, 377 and *note*; decides to advance on Fort Donelson, 377; need of reinforcements, 378, 379; headquarters of, at Donelson, 385, 432; receives despatch from General Buckner, 426; friendliness to General Wallace, 436; at Nashville, 440; meeting with Buell, 440; removed by Halleck, 441, 442 and *note*; succeeded by General Charles F. Smith, 441; released from suspension, 451; headquarters of, at Savannah, 453, 478, 479; on the *Tigress*, 461, 520, 533; order to General Wallace, 463; not prepared for battle, 480; surprised at Shiloh, 482, 484, 486-488, 491; at Pittsburg



# INDEX

- Landing, 521, 522; meeting with General Wallace, 544, 566; deposed, 575; at Memphis, 588; plans of, approved by Lincoln, 704; at City Point, 710, 790, 811, 813; his *Memoirs*, 807, 809, 810; orders General Wallace to western Texas, 814; letters from General Wallace to, 813, 815, 821, 823, 835, 836, 837, 839, 865, 866.
- "Gray Eagle," Captain Robert Milroy, 117.
- Greenwood, Mr. Miles, Napoleon guns of, 612.
- Grosvenor, Professor, of Robert College, 944; describes General Wallace's meeting with the sultan, 957-963.
- Grover, Tim, 298, 303.
- "Guthrie Grays" at Cincinnati, 605 n.
- Guzman, Angel, at Buena Vista, 169.
- HADJI ALI, second chamberlain to the sultan, 987.
- Hagerstown, General Patterson at, 277.
- Hall, Lieutenant-Colonel, C. K., commanding Fourteenth New Jersey, 748, 780.
- Halleck, Major-General, 441, 442, and *note*, 478, 479, 493, 570, 572, 576, 578, 582, 642, 643, 668, 703, 708, 709, 711, 718, 754, 783, 808.
- Hallowell, James, 298, 302, 305.
- Hamid II., Abdul, Sultan of Turkey, 961, 964, 965, 996.
- Hancock, General, appointed to command Middle Department, 853.
- Hannegan, Edward A., United States Senator, 215, 216, 222.
- Hardee, General, at Corinth, 451; at Shiloh, 494, 495, 511, 514.
- Hardee's *Infantry Tactics* mentioned, 245.
- Hardin, Colonel, commanding First Illinois at Buena Vista, 165, 167, 174.
- Harper & Brothers publish *Ben-Hur*, 938; mentioned, 968, 976, 1000.
- Harper, Mr. Joseph, receives *Ben-Hur* manuscript, 938, 939.
- Harper, Mr. Wesley, 21.
- Harper's Ferry, 277, 292, 315, 699, 700, 713, 714, 736, 740, 744, 754.
- Harris, Brigadier-General T. M., member of Lincoln commission, 847, 850.
- Harris, Governor, at Shiloh, 537, 538.
- Harrison, Frank, at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298.
- Harrison, General William Henry, 3, 73.
- Harrison, President Benjamin, note to General Wallace, 685 n.; offers General Wallace the mission to Brazil, 998, 999.
- Hartranft, Brevet General John A., special provost-marshal for Lincoln commission, 847.
- Hatch, Hon. George, mayor of Cincinnati, 606, 607, 608.
- Havre de Grace, ferry at, 710.
- Hawes, Brigadier-General J. M., in command of defences at Galveston, 837.
- Hawkins, General John, mentioned, 34.
- Hawkins, Mrs. John, kindness of, 34.
- Hay, Corporal David B., at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 293, 297, 298, 301, 305.
- Hayes, Major Charles S., commanding Fifth Ohio Cavalry, 447, 448, 452, 453.
- Hayes, Rutherford B., nominated for president, 900; letter to, from General Wallace, declining mission to Bolivia, 912; proclaimed insurrection in New Mexico, 914.
- Hayne, Paul Hamilton, letter to General Wallace relating to *Ben-Hur*, 947-949.
- Hayner, Major Henry Z., on Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680.
- Heap, Consul-General, at Wallace's presentation to the sultan, 958, 959.

## INDEX

- Heath, General, "siege of Cincinnati," 619, 626, 627, 628.
- Heiman, Colonel, fort named after, 367; evacuated Fort Heiman, 370; headquarters of, 371; took part in defence of Fort Donelson, 373 *n*.
- Heiman, Fort, built, 337; General Smith's advance against, 367; evacuated, 370; General Wallace in command at, 373.
- Hendricks, Thomas A., party leader, 236, 239, 248.
- Henry, Colonel, commanding the Tenth Vermont at Monocacy, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 745, 749.
- Henry, Fort, built and armed, 337; receives visit from the *Conestoga*, 363; the advance upon, 366, 367; occupation of, 371; General Smith at, 373; Grant's council of war at, 376; Wallace establishes headquarters at, 378; Wallace's return to, 434; Grant's return to, 440.
- Henry repeating rifle, the, 571.
- Herold, David E., trial of, 848, 850.
- Hickman fortified, 336.
- Hildebrand, Colonel, at Shiloh, 481, 485, 501, 510, 511, 512.
- Hillyer, Captain W. S., note to General Wallace, 409; visit to General Wallace, 435.
- Hindman, General Thomas C., at Shiloh, 510, 512, 513, 516, 526.
- Hoag, George F., on Florida commission, 908.
- Hollenback, J. C., 298, 303, 304, 305.
- Holman, Mr., the Great Objector, 249.
- Holt, Brigadier-General Joseph, judge-advocate and recorder for Lincoln commission, 847; summing up before Wirz commission, 855.
- Hooker, General, at Centreville, 654.
- Hoshour, Professor Samuel K., instructs Wallace in English, 56, 57, 58.
- Hovey, Colonel Alvin P., commanding Twenty-fourth Indiana at Shiloh, 556, 559, 565.
- Howard, General O. O., quoted, 191 *n.*, 691.
- Howe, Brigadier-General, at Harper's Ferry, 740, 741.
- Hughes, General, at Sunman's Station, 661.
- Hunter, Eppa, on Florida commission, 908.
- Hunter, Major-General David, commanding Department of West Virginia, 702, 704; president of Lincoln commission, 847, 848, 850.
- Hurlbut, General A. S., at Shiloh, 476, 482, 489, 490, 491, 508, 510, 512, 515, 516, 519, 534, 536, 537, 539; in command of the Department of the Gulf, 834, 838.
- IMPERIALISTS, Mexican, 839.
- Independent Londoun Rangers at Frederick, 729, 730.
- Indianapolis *Journal*, the, organ of Whig party in Indiana, 232; General Wallace's interview in, 903-907.
- Indians mentioned, 637, 638, 916, 918, 919, 920.
- Isaacs, Second Lieutenant Charles L., on General Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680.
- Island No. 10, fortified, 336; conquest of, 571.
- JACKSON, GENERAL ANDREW, mentioned, 118.
- Jackson, General Thomas J., at Shiloh, 509, 510, 521.
- John, General Wallace's horse, 368, 395, 397, 414, 460, 541, 543, 616.
- Johnson, General Albert Sidney, retires to Nashville, 375, 433; speeds reinforcements to Fort Donelson, 375; at Murfreesboro, 440; General Smith's scheme to hamper, 446; masses great army at Corinth, 451; moves on Pittsburg, 455; at Shiloh, 480, 483, 488, 492, 493,

# INDEX

- 496, 509, 510, 511, 513, 514, 521, 536; death, 540.
- Johnson, President Andrew, appoints Lincoln commission, 847, 848, 849, 850; appoints Wirz commission, 852, 857.
- Johnson, Colonel Bradley, at Monocacy, 733, 734, 743, 752, 800, 802, 803.
- Johnston, General Joseph E., at Harper's Ferry, 277, 279, 292, 315, 317; at Winchester, 308; at Manassas, 322; at Nashville, 375 *n*.
- Johnston, Mr. Reverdy, United States Senator from Maryland, 675.
- Jones, John Paul, 2.
- Jordan, Colonel, General Beauregard's chief of staff, quoted, 495, 496, 500, 501.
- Journal*, the, Indianapolis, organ of Whig party in Indiana, 232; General Wallace's interview in, 903-907.
- Juarez, President Benito, 813, 841, 843, 845, 862, 868, 870, 872, 881, 882, 886, 887.
- Judah, General, at the defence of Cincinnati, 615.
- Julian, George W., political leader, 232, 239.
- Juvera, Julien, at Buena Vista, 169.
- KAUTZ, BREVET MAJOR - GENERAL AUGUST V., member of Lincoln commission, 847.
- Keer, Mrs., Wallace's life with, 43.
- Keim, Major-General, at Martinsburg, 312.
- Kelly's Island, the fight at, 305.
- Kenly, General John R., commanding Third Separate Brigade, 679, 683 *n*., 706, 709, 710.
- Kennedy, John P., of Baltimore, 695, 696.
- Kentucky Volunteers, Colonel Marshall, at Buena Vista, 166.
- Kernan, Francis, on Florida commission, 903.
- Kinder, Captain, killed at Buena Vista, 187.
- King, Captain Adam E., at battle of Monocacy, 803.
- Klaw & Erlanger dramatize *Ben-Hur*, 1001.
- Kneffler, Captain Fred, 264, 265, 347, 350, 378, 393, 426, 464.
- "Knights of the Golden Circle" or "Sons of Liberty" secret organization, 656.
- Knott, Proctor, motion of, 907.
- Knowland, Miss Jane, 86.
- Knowland, Mrs. Elizabeth, "sociables" of, 86.
- Krout, Mary H., 796.
- Kunkel, Lieutenant, color-bearer at Buena Vista, 187, 190.
- LA ANGOSTURA secured, 166.
- La Rinconada, three days' siege at, 160-162.
- Landstreet, Colonel, commanding Eleventh Maryland Infantry, 705, 717, 721, 741, 746, 764, 771, 781, 786, 788, 799.
- Lane, Henry S., elected major First Indiana Infantry, 116; appeals to General Taylor, 128; elected lieutenant-colonel, 145; at Buena Vista, 167; seeks court of inquiry, 178; wounded, 187; party leader, 231, 233, 239; United States Senator, 660.
- Lane, James H., Colonel Third Regiment, First Indiana Infantry, 116.
- Lane, Joseph, Brigadier-General First Indiana Infantry, 116, 121.
- Lane, Mrs. Henry S., 207, 891, 972, 982.
- Lanius, Captain W. H., at Monocacy, 780 *n*.
- Laurence, Lieutenant - Colonel Samuel B., on General Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 679, 680, 704, 706, 710, 716, 731, 732, 803.
- Lee, General Robert E., 492, 493, 677; surrender of, 833, 838.
- Leggett, Colonel M. D., commanding Seventy-eighth Ohio at Shiloh, 564.



# INDEX

- Lexington*, the, at Fort Donelson, 396 *n.*, 443.
- Liberals, Mexican, 843, 845, 846, 862, 870.
- Lieb, Captain, at Monocacy, 724, 745, 746, 775.
- Light Infantry Tactics*, by General Wallace, 571, 572, 853, 857, 859.
- Lincoln, President Abraham, at Danville, Illinois, 222, 223; debate with Douglas, 252, 253, 254, 255; calls General Scott to command, 315; calls McClellan to Washington, 326; confided in Frémont, 328; requested Governor Yates to occupy Cairo, 336; General Wallace calls on, 669, 684; interest in Maryland election, 678; trust in Grant, 703; prevented complications with French in Mexico, 812; death, 846, 847.
- Lincoln commission, the, members of, 847.
- Lincoln County, insurrection in, 914, 915, 921.
- Lockwood, Brigadier-General, in charge of Middle Department, 677, 803.
- Lombardini, Manuel, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Long, Dr., of Robert College, 944.
- Lord, Captain Thomas, aide to General Dix, 823.
- Louisville*, the, at Fort Donelson, 396 *n.*
- Love, General John, of Indianapolis, 615, 658.
- Lull, Henry C., witness before Wirz commission, 855.
- Lyman, Captain Charles W., appointed quartermaster, 347, 378.
- Lynch, Colonel, commanding Fifty-eighth Illinois at Fort Donelson, 389, 406, 407.
- Lyon, Nathaniel, victories, 327.
- Lytle, Colonel W. H., witness before Buell commission, 645.
- MACARTHUR, BRIGADIER - GENERAL, at Shiloh, 379, 508, 518, 519, 529.
- Macauley, Adjutant, at Cumberland, 283.
- McCauseland, at battle of Monocacy, 718, 800.
- McClellan, General George B., relieves General Morris, 293; congratulates Colonel Wallace, 306; in Washington, 326.
- McClermand, Brigadier - General John A., threatens Columbus, 356 *n.*; advance on Fort Henry, 366, 367; at Grant's council of war, 376; unpleasantness between, and Grant, 377 and *note*; advance on Fort Donelson, 378; in position, 385; asks General Wallace for assistance, 399; report of battle, 400, 409; division in full retreat, 402; visit to General Wallace, 410; at Shiloh, 476, 479, 482, 488, 489, 490, 512, 514, 515, 516, 519, 525, 526, 527, 528; at Corinth, 576.
- McComas, Judge, death of, 919.
- McCook, General Alexander D., at Shiloh, 562, 563; witness before Buell commission, 645.
- McCook, Colonel Daniel, witness before Buell commission, 645.
- McCook, Colonel Edward, witness before Buell commission, 645.
- McCord, Lieutenant-Colonel W. D., commanding First Nebraska at Shiloh, 565.
- McCullough, Major, at Buena Vista, 166.
- McDonald, Joseph E., United States Senator, 43; party leader, 236, 239, 248.
- McDougal, John, chosen first lieutenant of Indiana Volunteers, 114; becomes captain, 116.
- McDowell, General Irvin, 315; march to Centreville, 320; repulsed by Johnson at Manassas, 322; at Shiloh, 512, 513, 514.
- McDowell, Major Malcolm, army paymaster, 613.
- McGinnis, Lieutenant-Colonel G. F., commanding Eleventh Indiana Volunteers, 273, 282,



# INDEX

- 283, 324, 325, 338, 346, 547, 559, 560, 565.
- McHenry, Colonel, commanding Seventeenth Kentucky, 389, 400.
- McHenry, Fort, Brigadier-General Morris at, 710.
- McKee, Colonel, commanding Second Kentucky at Buena Vista, 167, 174.
- McPherson, Major-General, 470, 480.
- Mace, Dan, at Danville, 222, 225.
- Macfeely, Colonel Robert, witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Macon, Surgeon, at Cervalvo, 137, 138, 142.
- Mahan, Rev. W. D., accused of plagiarism, 942, 943, 944, 945.
- Manassas, General Beauregard at, 277, 308; movement on, 317-321.
- Map: scene of operations in western Kentucky and adjacent territory, 334; used by General Wallace at Crump's Landing, 449; showing camps of the Army of Tennessee at Pittsburg Landing, 477; diagram No. 1, Shiloh, 506; diagram No. 2, Shiloh, 520.
- Markland, Colonel A. H., post-agent of army, 453.
- Marshall, Brigadier-General, president court of inquiry, 179.
- Marshall, Colonel, at Buena Vista, 166.
- Martinsburg, army massed at, 308.
- Maryland Battery, Captain Alexander, at Monocacy, 706, 721, 757, 758, 759, 771, 781.
- Maryland, legislature of, provided for election to decide on abolishing slavery, 678; slavery abolished in, by constitutional amendment, 683.
- Mason, Rodney, at Shiloh, 508.
- Matamoras, General Taylor, at, 122, 124; a rebel port, 813, 814, 815, 816, 820.
- Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, 839, 842, 844; executed, 886.
- May, Lieutenant-Colonel, commanding Second Dragoons at Buena Vista, 166.
- Maynard, Horace, mentioned, 940.
- Meade, General, sends troops for the defence of Washington, 810.
- Mexican forces at Buena Vista, 169.
- Mexican Imperialists, 839.
- Mexican Liberals, 843, 845, 846, 862, 870.
- Mexican loan, efforts to place, 863, 864, 866, 868.
- Mexican minister, Mr. Romero, at Washington, 859, 862, 863, 868, 869, 870, 872.
- Mexico, French troops withdrawn from, 886.
- Mexico, war with, 102-107.
- Miller, Colonel John F., witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Miller, Justice, on Florida commission, 908.
- Milroy, Captain Robert, dubbed "Gray Eagle," 117, 145.
- Minnesingers, Wood's, 369, 383, 387, 391, 401, 405, 406, 407.
- Miñon, José, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Missouri Compromise, 233.
- Mitchell, Fort, 614.
- Mitchell, General O. M., 610.
- Monocacy, battle of, 699, 700, 707, 709, 712, 749-796.
- Monroe, Fortress, Nineteenth Army Corps at, 810.
- Monterey, General Wallace at, 876, 877, 879.
- Montgomery, Commodore, defeat at Memphis, 585.
- Montgomery Guards, organization of, 245; members all become commissioned officers, 247 *n*.
- Moore, Colonel, commanding the Twenty-first Missouri at Shiloh, 490, 491, 504.
- Moore, Commodore, head of Texan navy, 75.
- Morgan, Brigadier John H., at Cumberland Gap, 596; to raid Indiana, 656, 657, 658, 659, 661.

# INDEX

- Morgan, General George W., at Cumberland Gap, 596, 597.
- Morris, Brigadier-General, at Fort McHenry, 710; at Baltimore, 803.
- Morris, General Thomas A., captain of "City Greys," 93; at Grafton, 277, 278, 279, 293.
- Morrison, Colonel, 379, 385 *n*.
- Morton, Camp, 266, 268.
- Morton, Governor Oliver P., 232 *n*., 238, 260, 261, 263, 264, 267, 589, 590, 591, 596, 606, 610, 631, 657, 658, 659, 666, 667, 859, 860, 908.
- Morton (Indiana) battery, Captain Behr, at Shiloh, 526.
- Mount Airy coal-miners, 293, 295.
- Mudd, Dr. Samuel A., 848, 849.
- Munir Pasha, grand master of ceremonies, 960, 961.
- Murdoch, James E., 616, 640.
- NATIONAL Republican convention of 1876, 900.
- Nave, Christian C., elected lieutenant-colonel First Indiana Infantry, 116; voyage to Brazos Santiago, 119; resigned, 145.
- Nebeker's Ferry, Wallace's early days at, 10, 11.
- Neff, Colonel, commanding First Regiment, Cincinnati, 615.
- Nelson, General, at Shiloh, 487, 488, 540; in command at Lexington, 600; defeat at Richmond, 604.
- Newman, Bishop, letter to General Wallace, 1000.
- Newmarket, Wallace's retreat towards, 787, 799.
- Newsham, Captain, assistant adjutant-general to General Smith, 350.
- "Night Hawk Rangers," the, Seventeenth Virginia Cavalry, flag of, captured, 800, 805-807; description of flag of, 807, 808.
- Nineteenth Army Corps, Major-General Emory commanding, at Fortress Monroe, 810.
- Ninth Indiana battery, First Lieutenant George Brown commanding, at Shiloh, 541, 542.
- Noyes, governor of Ohio, 901, 902.
- Nueces Bay, General Taylor at, 103, 105.
- O'LAUGHLIN, MICHAEL, trial of, 848, 849.
- Old Reynosa, attack on, 145, 146.
- One Hundred and Fifty-first Regiment, New York, Colonel William Emerson, 748.
- One Hundred and Forty-fourth Ohio National Guard, Colonel Allison L. Brown, at Monocacy, 705, 746, 775.
- One Hundred and Sixth Regiment, New York, Captain Edward Paine, 748.
- Ord, Major-General, on Buell commission, 642; succeeded Wallace in command of Sixth Army Corps at Baltimore, 802, 809.
- Ortega, José Maria, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Osborne, Lieutenant-Colonel, commanding Thirty-first Indiana, 389.
- Osman Pasha, minister of war, 960.
- Owen, Hon. Robert Dale, interest in Mexican loan, 867.
- Owl Creek, 453, 476, 513, 525, 526.
- PACHECO, FRANCISCO, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Paducah, Eleventh Indiana at, 338; General Smith at, *ibid.*; Eighth Missouri at, 342.
- Paine, Captain Edward, commanding One Hundred and Sixth New York, 748.
- Palma, Resaca de la, battle of, 107.
- Panther Island, the *Conestoga* at, 362, 364, 369.
- Pasha, Assim, minister of foreign affairs, 960, 961.
- Pasha, Munir, grand master of ceremonies, 960, 961.
- Pasha, Osman, minister of war, 960.

# INDEX

- Pasquides, Thomas Ath, letter from, to Mrs. Hill, 966.
- Patterson's Creek, the fight at, 302-303.
- Patterson, Major-General Robert, 136, 143, 144, 277, 291, 292, 305, 308, 310, 315, 317-320.
- Payne, Henry B., on Florida commission, 908.
- Payne, Lewis, trial of, 848, 850.
- Pea Ridge, camp at, 576.
- Peckham, Lieutenant - Colonel James, commanding Eighth Missouri at Shiloh, 547, 556, 565.
- Perez, Francisco, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Pettit, John, political leader, 222, 248, 249.
- Phelps, Lieutenant - Commander of the *Conestoga*, 357; at Panther Island, 362; advance against Fort Henry, 366; reconnaissance up the Tennessee, 374.
- Phillips, Wendell, mentioned, 232, 239.
- Piatt, Major Donn, on Buell commission, 642, 643.
- Pitman, Mr. Benn, served at Buell commission, 643.
- Pittsburg*, the, at Fort Donelson, 396 *n*.
- Pittsburg Landing, 445, 446, 447, 451, 455, 468, 476, 479, 525, 552 *n*.
- "Plug-Uglies" of Baltimore, 674.
- Point Isabel, General Taylor at, 106, 121, 123; meeting at, 824, 828, 831, 833, 838.
- Polk, General Leonidas, seizes Columbus, 336, 340, 354; at Corinth, 451; at Shiloh, 494, 495, 511, 514, 521, 532.
- Pond, Colonel Preston, at Shiloh, 548 *n*, 550.
- Pope, General John, commanding Army of the Mississippi, 571, 573; at Farmington, 578.
- Pope, Major Joseph P., assistant commissary-general, 74, 347, 378, 658.
- Porter, Colonel Fitz-John, assistant adjutant-general, 311.
- Porter, Lieutenant, mysterious disappearance of, 106.
- Powell, Lieutenant, Company I, Fourth United States Dragoons 347.
- Prentiss, General Benjamin Mayberry, occupied Cairo, 336; at Shiloh, 476, 482, 490, 491, 495, 501, 504, 505, 507, 508, 509, 510, 513, 519, 533, 535, 536.
- Prentiss, Sergeant S., orator, 193, 194.
- QUARLES, JOHN, lawyer, 100.
- RAMSEY, ALEXANDER, secretary of war, 917.
- Rawles, Henderson, early companion, 21.
- Rawlins, Major John A., Grant's adjutant-general, 352, 376, 382, 386, 390, 391, 392, 401, 402, 470.
- Read, Thomas, Buchanan, paints portrait of Governor Morton, 612; quoted, 617 *n*.; entertainments given by, 640.
- Reck, Luther, death of, 122.
- Reed, Colonel, commanding the Forty-fourth Indiana regiment, 389, 400.
- Reed, Major D. W., historian of the Shiloh Battle Association, 534 *n*.
- Reid, Whitelaw, military correspondent for the Cincinnati *Gazette*, 459, 460, 461, 501, 502.
- "Remember Buena Vista," motto of Indiana regiments, 272 and *note*.
- Reynolds, David, adjutant-general, 108.
- Reynolds, Major-General Joseph J., name in Wabash College, 42 *n*.
- Richmond, the fall of, 833, 838.
- Ricker, Major, at Shiloh, quoted, 484, 485 *n*.
- Ricketts, Brigadier - General James, Third Division, Sixth Army Corps at battle of Monocacy, 736, 745, 749, 750, 752, 761, 763, 765, 766, 769, 771, 773, 775, 776, 777, 780, 783,



# INDEX

- 784, 785, 786, 787, 789, 791, 796, 801, 808, 809, 810.  
 Riggs, Dr., of Robert College, 944.  
 Ringgold, Major, death of, 107.  
 Rio Grande, blockade of the, 106.  
 Ristine, Judge Joseph, generosity of, 218, 219.  
 Robinson, United States marshal, 248.  
 Rogers, Major, bearer of flag of truce at Fort Donelson, 426.  
 Rogers, Rev. John D., chaplain on Wallace's staff, 347.  
 Romero, Mr., Mexican minister at Washington, 845, 846, 859, 862, 863, 868, 869, 870, 872.  
 Romney, Eleventh Indiana regiment at, 286.  
 "Room fourteen," the meeting in, 258, 260.  
 Root, Colonel, at Annapolis, 706.  
 Ross, Colonel, of Illinois, 414, 415, 418.  
 Ross, Colonel James R., aide-de-camp on Wallace's staff, 347, 378, 379, 459, 460, 462, 463, 560, 593, 595, 605 *n.*, 637, 680, 687, 735, 749, 752, 755, 756, 767, 771, 775, 782, 783, 795, 803, 824.  
 Ross, Robert, agent of Confederacy, 842.  
 "Rough and Ready," nickname for General Taylor, 151.  
 Rousseau, General Lovell H., senator, 86; witness before Buell commission, 645.  
 Rowley, Captain, 466, 467, 468.  
 SALTILLO, 159, 161, 163, 165.  
 Salvadori, Professor Henry, translates *Ben-Hur* into Italian, 939, 942.  
 Sanders, Dr. John H., 45, 77.  
 Sanders, scout, at Corinth, 450.  
 Sanders, Zerelda G., step-mother to Lew Wallace, 45, 46.  
 Sanderson, Colonel W. C., commanding Twenty-third Indiana regiment, 347, 348, 383, 386, 558, 565.  
 San Luis Potosi, Santa Anna at, 151.  
 San Patricio, 816, 817.  
 Santa Anna, President, 149; at San Luis Potosi, 151; at Encarnacion, 160; at Buena Vista 165-176.  
 Santa Fé, described by Mrs. Wallace, 912, 913; insurrection in, 914.  
 Saunders, Mr. Thomas, loyalty of, 605.  
 Schenck, General Robert, advice to General Wallace, 672, 673, 680, 687, 688.  
 Schoepf, Brigadier-General Albin, on Buell commission, 642, 643.  
 Schofield, General John M., 865, 866, 867, 868.  
 Schurz, Carl, secretary of the interior, 916, 917, 918.  
 Scott, Colonel, at Big Hill, 599; at Covington, 619, 621.  
 Scott, General Winfield, at Whig convention of 1848, 201; telegram to Colonel Wallace, 276; autograph note to Colonel Wallace, 292; in command, 315.  
 Scott's *Infantry Tactics*, 94, 110, 116, 131.  
 Second Illinois Infantry, Colonel Bissell, at Buena Vista, 167, 168, 171.  
 Second Indiana Infantry, Colonel Bowles, at Buena Vista, 167, 170, 171; General Taylor's report of, 177; court of inquiry exonerates, 178-181.  
 Second Kentucky Infantry, Colonel McKee, at Buena Vista, 167, 168, 171, 173, 174.  
 Second Mississippi Volunteers, 136.  
 Second United States Cavalry, the, at Matamoras, 149.  
 Second United States Dragoons, Lieutenant-Colonel May, at Buena Vista, 166.  
 Second Wisconsin, willingness of, to remain beyond term of enlistment, 322.  
 Seventeenth Kentucky regiment, Colonel McHenry, at Fort Donelson, 389, 400.  
 Seventeenth Virginia Cavalry,



# INDEX

- "Night Hawk Rangers," flag of, captured at Urbana, 800, 805-807; description of flag of, 807, 808.
- Seventy-eighth Ohio regiment, Colonel M. D. Leggett, at Shiloh, 564.
- Seventy-sixth Ohio regiment, Colonel R. Woods, at Shiloh, 389, 407, 561, 563, 565.
- Seward, Colonel William H., son of Secretary Seward, at battle of Monocacy, 804, 805.
- Seward, Mrs. William H., telegram from General Wallace to, 802.
- Seward, William H., United States senator, 253.
- Shackelford, Colonel, commanding Twenty-fifth Kentucky, 389.
- Shaw, Colonel, commanding Fourteenth Iowa at Shiloh, 356 and *note*.
- Sherman, General William T., at Buena Vista, 166; commands First Division, 438, 442; at Shiloh, 476, 479, 481, 483, 486, 489, 490, 491, 495, 505, 510, 511, 512, 519, 525, 526, 527; at Corinth, 576; letter to General Wallace, 662-664, 665, 666; congratulations to General Wallace, 889.
- Shiloh, battle of, 446, 459-569.
- Shiloh Church, 495, 504, 511, 515, 536.
- Shiloh Run, 563 *n*.
- Sigel, Major-General F., in command at Harper's Ferry, 704, 706, 709, 714, 718, 724, 740, 752, 754.
- Silver-heels, 298, 300, 301.
- Simpson, Major Josiah, on General Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680.
- Simpson, orderly, 456.
- Sixth Army Corps, First Brigade, Third Division, Colonel William S. Truex, at Monocacy, 736, 749.
- Sixty-eighth Indiana regiment, Colonel Wallace in command, 593, 595.
- Sixty-eighth Ohio regiment, Colonel Steedman commanding, at Fort Donelson, 389.
- Slaughter, Brigadier-General J. E., commanding West District of Texas, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 830, 833, 835, 836, 837, 838.
- Slavery, contest over, 233-241.
- Slidell, John, commissioner for the Confederacy in Paris, 841.
- Smith, General A. J., regulars at Cincinnati, 615, 622, 631.
- Smith, Charles C., promoted first lieutenant, 116.
- Smith, General Charles F., at Paducah, 332, 338; headquarters of, 339; entertains Colonel Wallace, 340, 341; advice to Colonel Wallace, 343-344; anger, 350; receives visit from General Grant, 351; difficult to surprise, 354; feint against Fort Henry, 356 and *note*; advance against Fort Heiman, 367; takes possession of Fort Heiman, 370; called to Fort Henry, 373; at Grant's council of war, 376; advances on Fort Donelson, 378; in position, 385; supporting attack, 416; his division to have entered Fort Donelson first, 432; gallantry of charge of, 433; occupies fortified places in the Cumberland, 440; succeeds General Grant, 441; visits General Wallace, 444; accident to and death of, 445, 518; sagacity, 476.
- Smith, General E. Kirby, commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department, 596, 598, 599, 604, 619, 626, 817, 822, 827, 832, 833, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843.
- Smith, General Green Clay, mentioned, 615, 631.
- Smith, Captain James, commanding Battery A, Chicago Light Artillery, 347.
- Smith, Colonel Morgan L., commanding Eighth Missouri regiment, 342, 348, and *note*, 349,

# INDEX

- 379, 380, 387, 388, 413, 415, 416, 417, 420, 423, 424, 434, 435, 460, 471, 543, 547, 552, 565; at Vicksburg, 819.
- Smith, General W. Sooy, witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Smugglers, women, arrest of, 688, 689.
- Snake Creek, 445, 447, 448, 449, 453, 527, 548, 549.
- "Sons of Liberty," 656 *n*.
- Sophia, St., Mosque of, in Constantinople, 942.
- Spangler, Edward, trial of, 848, 849.
- "Squatter sovereignty," Douglas's, 235, 238.
- "Squirrel Hunters" at the defence of Cincinnati, 613.
- Stahel, Lieutenant-Colonel J. A., commanding Eighty-seventh Pennsylvania, 749, 780.
- Stanhope, Colonel, at Cincinnati, 615.
- Stanton, Fort, New Mexico, 914.
- Stanton, Secretary, 582, 590, 591, 622, 655, 658, 667, 670, 672, 673, 674, 684, 685.
- Starkweather, Colonel, mentioned, 322.
- Steedman, Colonel, commanding Sixty-eighth Ohio regiment at Fort Donelson, 389.
- Steene, Captain, commanding First United States Dragoons at Buena Vista, 166.
- Stipp, Perry, episode with Lew Wallace, 133-135.
- St. Louis*, the (flag-ship), at Fort Donelson, 396 *n*, 399.
- Stockett Mathews, Mr., of Baltimore, 676, 679.
- Stone, Colonel, victim of superior's spleen, 311.
- Stone, General C. P., his letter to General Wallace regarding *The Fair God*, 953.
- Stoney Lonesome, the march to, 452, 462, 526 *n*.
- Story, W. W., his letter to Mrs. Wallace relating to *Ben-Hur*, 952.
- Streight, Colonel A. D., witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Strong, Justice, on Florida commission, 908.
- Stuart, Colonel Dan, at Shiloh, 505, 507, 508, 509, 519, 555.
- Sturm, General Herman, Morton's chief of ordnance, 862, 863, 864, 870, 872.
- Sultan of Turkey, the, Abdul Hamid II., 961, 964, 965, 996.
- Surratt, John, escape and trial of, 848.
- Surratt, Mary E., trial and execution of, 848, 849, 850.
- Suwanee*, the, wrecked off the Florida Keys, 871.
- Swan, Mayor, of Baltimore, 686.
- TABLE of commands at Buena Vista, 166, 169.
- Taffa, farmer, 51 *n*.
- Taney, Chief-Justice, and the Dred Scott case, 241.
- Taylor, General Zachary, departure from New Orleans, 103; razes camp on Nueces Bay, 105; at Point Isabel, 106, 121; takes Camargo, 124; Major Lane's appeal to, for relief, 128; march to Monterey, 129; orders First Regiment's return to camp at mouth of Rio Grande, 143, 144; nickname for, 151; his appearance, 153; joins General Wool at Buena Vista, 160; condemns Indiana regiments, 164; at Buena Vista, 172-176; report of battle at Buena Vista, 177; nominated for president, 201; elected, 204; influenced by Jefferson Davis, 272; treatment of First Indiana regiment, 310.
- Tenth Vermont, Colonel Henry commanding, at Monocacy, 735, 738, 739, 745, 749, 795.
- Test, Esther French, marriage to David Wallace, 5; illness of, 32; death and burial of, 33, 34.
- Test, John, politician, 5 and *note*, 6 *n*.
- Texas, independence of, 101.
- Texas Volunteers, Major McCul-

# INDEX

- lough commanding, at Buena Vista, 166.
- Thayer, Colonel John M., commanding First Nebraska regiment at Donelson, 389, 460, 464; at Shiloh, 543 and *note*, 547, 565.
- "The Dead Line," General Wallace's picture, 854, 855, 887.
- The Fair God*, 90, 97, 101, 196, 228, 887, 888, 889, 890, 892, 893, 894, 923.
- "The Hornet's Nest," 530, 536.
- The Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston*, quoted, 499, 500, 537, 538.
- The Man-at-Arms: A Tale of the Tenth Century*, Wallace's first novel, 63-71.
- The Prince of India*, 1, 982, 983, 1000.
- Third Indiana, Colonel Lane commanding, at Buena Vista, 166, 172, 898.
- Third Regiment, Maryland, Potomac Home Brigade, Colonel Charles Gilpin commanding, at the battle of Monocacy, 705, 721, 732, 733, 799.
- Third United States Artillery, Sherman and Bragg commanding, at Buena Vista, 166, 168, 173, 175, 176.
- Thirteen scouts, fight of the, at Patterson's Creek, 293, 298-304.
- Thirteenth Missouri, at Shiloh, 529.
- Thirtieth Illinois regiment at Fort Donelson, 400.
- Thirty-first Indiana, Colonel Charles Cruft commanding, at Fort Donelson, 389, 390, 400 *n*.
- Thirty-second Illinois, Captain Davidson commanding, at Fort Donelson, 407.
- Thirty-second Indiana Volunteers, Colonel August Willich commanding, at Shiloh, 562.
- Thomas, Colonel George H., 311, 575, 645.
- Thomas, E. P., at the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298, 303, 304.
- Thomas, Lorenzo, adjutant-general, 274.
- Thornton, Captain, ambushed, 106; the killing of, 145.
- Thurber at Shiloh, 542, 546, 547, 548, 552, 553, 561, 563, 565.
- Thurston, Captain Dickinson P., on Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680.
- Tigress*, the, General Grant on, 520.
- Tilghman, General Lloyd, at Fort Henry, 363 *n*.
- Tilghman's Creek, 474, 541, 543, 546, 548 *n*.
- Tod, Camp, General Wallace at, 637, 640.
- Tod, Governor, of Ohio, 606, 610.
- Tompkins, Brevet-Colonel C. H., member of Lincoln commission, 847, 850.
- Torena, Michel, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Townsend, E. D., assistant adjutant-general, 642, 673, 679.
- Truex, Colonel William S., commanding First Brigade, Third Division, Sixth Army Corps, at battle of Monocacy, 736, 749, 780, 784.
- Tuttle, Colonel, succeeds MacArthur at Shiloh, 518, 519, 536.
- Twelfth New York regiment, Colonel Daniel Butterfield commanding, 314.
- Twentieth Ohio regiment, Colonel Whittlesey commanding, at Fort Donelson, 389, 407; Colonel M. F. Force commanding, at Shiloh, 564.
- Twenty-fifth Kentucky regiment, Colonel Shackelford commanding, at Fort Donelson, 389, 400.
- Twenty-fourth Indiana regiment, Colonel Alvin P. Hovey commanding, at Shiloh, 556, 559, 565.
- Twenty-third Indiana regiment, Colonel W. C. Sanderson commanding, 347, 348, 383, 386, 558, 565.
- Tyler, Brigadier-General Daniel, on Buell commission, 642.
- Tyler, Brigadier-General E. B.,



# INDEX

- commanding First Separate Brigade, 706, 707, 714, 734, 738, 739, 741, 744, 745, 746, 749, 750, 761, 764, 771, 775, 781, 786, 787, 799.
- Tyler, the, at Fort Donelson, 396 n, 443.
- United States Army Regulations, The*, 343.
- Urvea, General, Mexican, sent to raid General Taylor's supplies, 149.
- VAN BUREN, MARTIN, presidential candidate, 203.
- Van Dyke, Rev. Cornelius V. A., translates *Ben-Hur* into Arabic, 939.
- Veatch, Colonel, at Shiloh, 515, 517, 519, 526, 529, 532.
- Victorio, Apache chief, 916, 918, 919.
- Villamil, Ignacio de Mora y, at Buena Vista, 169.
- Voorhees, Daniel W., opens law office in Covington, 217, 221.
- WADSWORTH, COLONEL HENRY W., adjutant-general, 595, 597, 601.
- Wagner, Colonel George D., witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Walker, Captain, of the *Carondelet*, 431.
- Walker, Major-General J. G., commanding the Department of Texas, 827, 832, 837, 838, 840.
- Wallace, Andrew, 2 3.
- Wallace's Bridge, 445, 447.
- Wallace, David, obtains cadetship at West Point, 3; romance of, 4; marriage to Esther French Test, 5; political record, 5, 6; sudden death, 7; lieutenant-governor, 9; review of militia by, 17, 18; death of wife, 33; marriage to Zerelda G. Sanders, 45; elected governor, 47; readings of, 81, 82; parting with son, 115.
- Wallace, Edward, 8.
- Wallace, Henry Lane, 225, 808, 920, 979.
- Wallace, General Lewis, belief in Christianity, 1; ancestry, 2, 3, 5; death of father, 7; birthplace, 8; appearance, *ibid.*; death of brother, 9; life at Covington, 9-11; fear of ghosts, 13, 31, 37; commencement of school life, 13, 14; draws pictures of battles, 15, 16; first book, 20; studies geography, 25; truancy, 27, 35, 46; the first stove, 29; at the circus, 32; illness of mother, 32; death of mother, 33; burial of mother, 34; first fight, 36; runs off to Crawfordsville, 38; at Wabash College, 39-41; name in library of Wabash College, 42; at the Keer farm, 44; a new mother, 45, 46; father elected governor, 47; moves to Indianapolis, *ibid.*; facility in drawing, 48; learns to paint, 50; revels in Irving and Cooper, 54; days given to fun, 55; discovers capacity for writing, 56; lesson in English, 57; turning-point in life, 58, 59; joins literary society, 60; writer of poems, 62; first novel, 63; trip to Tippecanoe battleground, 73; attempt to go to Texas, 75; capture and return home, 77; leaves home, 78, 83; enters office of Robert A. Duncan, 85; meets Lovell H. Rousseau, 86; preparation for authorship, 87, 89; begins *The Fair God*, 90; takes drawing lessons, 91; elected second sergeant of the "Marion Rifles," 93; passion for military life, 94; recollection of Henry Clay, 95, 96; reporter for Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, 96; studies law, 98; commences practice, 100; interest in war news, 103; impression of Governor Whitcomb, 109; makes the acquaintance of Judges Isaac Blackford and Charles Dewey, 111; examined for attorney's



# INDEX

license, 112; opens recruiting-office, 114; chosen second lieutenant of volunteers, *ibid.*; leaves for New Albany, 115; officers of regiment, 116; landing in New Orleans, 118; voyage to Brazos Santiago, 119; kept no diary, 121; at Camp Belknap, 122, 123, 124; in camp at mouth of Rio Grande, 122-128; attempt to go with army, 130; unpopular with men of company, 131; instruction in tactics, 132; episode with Stipp, 133-135; regiment ordered to Walnut Springs, 136; at Cervalvo, 136-142; regiment ordered to return to former camp, 143; first fight, 146; at Matamoras, 148; a costly shot, 149, 150; disappointed in General Taylor's appearance, 153; in camp at Walnut Springs, 154; visit to Monterey, 155; the first panic, 158; three days' siege at La Rinconada, 160-162; meets General Wool at Buena Vista, 163; on the field at Buena Vista, 164; description of battle at Buena Vista, 165-176; defends Second Indiana, 177-192; mustered out, 193; hears Sergeant S. Prentiss, 194; robbed of savings, 195; applies for license from Supreme Court, 196; opposed to General Taylor's election to presidency, 202; edits campaign paper, 204; becomes a Democrat, 205; meets Miss Susan Elston, 207; courtship, 211; receives license from Supreme Court, 213; opens office in Covington, 215; the meeting at Chambersburg, 220; meets Abraham Lincoln, 222, 223; made prosecuting attorney, 224; marriage of, 225; joint discussion with James Wilson, 226, 227; finishes *The Fair God*, 228; the book agent, 229; first essay in politics, 235; freedom or slavery, 238-240; becomes a

Douglas Democrat, 241; horror of civil war, 243; preparations, 244; organizes the Montgomery Guards, 245; at Democratic convention of 1856, 249; elected state senator, 251; bill for restraining divorces, 251; bill for choosing United States Senators by General Assembly, 252; at the Lincoln-Douglas debate, 253; at the Democratic secret conference at Indianapolis, 258; reconciliation with Morton, 260; telegram from Morton, 261; appointed adjutant-general, 263; *colonel* of the Eleventh Indiana regiment, 268; address to regiment, 271, 272; ordered to Evansville, 274; telegram from Winfield Scott, 276; arrival in Grafton, 279; arrival at Cumberland, 283, 290; skirmish at Romney, 286; congratulations from General Scott, 292; help refused, 293, 295; account of the fight at Patterson's Creek, 298-305; congratulations from Patterson, McClellan, and Colfax, 305, 306, 307; ordered to Martinsburg, 308; meeting with General Patterson, 310; assigned to Abercrombie's brigade, 311; account of the movement on Manassas, 317-321; return home and muster out, 323; tribute to Lieutenant-Colonel McGinnis, 324, 325; meeting with McClellan, 326; ordered to Missouri, 327; arrival in St. Louis, 328; cold reception, 330; transferred to Paducah, Kentucky, 332; arrival at Paducah, 337; reports to General Smith, 338, 339, 340; receives notice of commission as brigadier-general, 342; consults General Smith, 343, 344; accepts commission, 345; parts with Eleventh Indiana, 346; selects staff, 347; inspects command, 348; affair of rebel flag, 350, 351; visit from

# INDEX

General Grant, 352; damaging newspaper stories, 353; at Viola, 355; Calloway *voyage*, 356; trip on the *Conestoga*, 357; the fugitive slave, 359; at Panther Island, 362; observation of Fort Henry, 363, 364; organized brigade at Smithland, 365; the advance upon Fort Henry, 366, 367; John, his horse, 368; takes possession of Fort Henry, 370; views the ruins of Fort Henry, 371; in command at Fort Heiman, 373; at Grant's council of war, 376; favors advance against Fort Donelson, 377; established headquarters at Fort Henry, 378; in readiness to join Grant, 380; ordered to report at Fort Donelson, 382; at Grant's headquarters, 385, 386, 387; to command Third Division, 387; assigned to centre position in line of battle, *ibid.*; lunches with Grant, 388; troops comprise Third Division, 389; under fire, 390; takes position, 391, 392; McClernand asks for assistance, 399; orders Colonel Cruft to McClernand, 400; meets W. H. L. Wallace, 403; turns the rout, 406-408; note from Captain Hillyer, 409; receives visit from General McClernand, 410; recovers the road, 413-419; in front of Fort Donelson, 427; meeting with General Buckner, 428; interview with Lieutenant Dove, 431; takes possession of Fort Donelson, 432; returns to Fort Henry, 434; visit from Captain Hillyer, 435; General Grant's friendliness to, 436; new command, 437; sword presented to, 439; arrival in Savannah, 443; visit from General Smith, 444; farewell to General Smith, 445; secures possession of Crump's Landing, 447; engages scouts, 450; decides to restore the Shunpike, 452; calls on General Grant, 453;

commissioned major-general, *ibid.*; despatch to Grant, 457; ride to Stoney Lonesome, 461; receives orders from Grant, 463; second order from Grant, 466; third order from Grant, 468; ordered to Pittsburg Landing, *ibid.*; meets McPherson and Rawlins, 470; at Tilghman's Creek, 474; account of the first day at Shiloh, 476-540; account of second day at Shiloh, 541-569; meetings with Grant, 544, 566; calls on General Halleck, 570; encampment at Shiloh Run, 571; his book on tactics, 571, 572, 853, 857, 859; scheme to attack Corinth, 573; meets Grant after Shiloh, 576; in camp at Pea Ridge, *ibid.*; criticises General Halleck, 579; in camp at Raleigh, 583; at Memphis, 586; takes possession of the *Avalanche*, 587; relieved from command, 589; ordered to Kentucky by Morton, 592; colonel of the Sixty-sixth Indiana, 593; in command at Lexington, 594; appointed Henry W. Wadsworth's adjutant-general, 595; ordered to Morgan's relief, 596; relieved from command, 600; receives telegram from General Wright, 603; at Cincinnati, 605; interview with Mayor Hatch, 606; his proclamation to citizens of Cincinnati, 607; transferred headquarters to Covington, 618; thanked by chamber of commerce and Ohio legislature, 624, 625; meets General Heath, 626; ordered to Camp Chase, 631; relieved of command, 640; appointed on Buell commission, 641-653; telegram from General Halleck to, 655; called to Morgan's assistance, 657; letter from General Sherman to, 662-664, 665, 666; sends telegram to Secretary Stanton, 667; given command of Eighth Army Corps at Baltimore, 668;

# INDEX

calls on President Lincoln, 669, 684; calls on Secretary Stanton, 669, 685; arrival in Baltimore, 677; completes staff, 680; calls on Governor Bradford, 682; letter from Henry Winter Davis to, 683; conference with Mayor Swan, of Baltimore, 686; arrests woman smuggler, 689; seizes Maryland Club - House, 690-691; social life while in Baltimore, 695-697; disposition of troops, 706, 710; at Monocacy Junction, 712; preparation for battle, 724; at Frederick City, 729-732; joined by Colonel Henry, 735; withdraws troops from Frederick City to Monocacy Junction, 747; meeting with Brigadier-General James Ricketts, 752-755; description of the battle of Monocacy, 757-796; under fire, 760, 763, 764; burns bridge, 778; sends telegrams to Generals Grant and Halleck, 783; orders retreat, 788; superseded by Major-General Ord, 802; returns to Baltimore, 803; report to War Department concerning operations of command at Monocacy, 799-804; account of the capture of flag of the "Night Hawk Rangers," 805-807; bivouacked with Ricketts, 808; Grant's tribute to, in his *Memoirs*, 809, 810; visit to Grant at City Point, 811; letters of, to Grant at City Point, 813, 815; ordered to western Texas, 817; at Vicksburg, 818; at New Orleans, 819; at Brazos Island, 820; aims to bring Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana voluntarily back to the Union, 821; meeting with General Slaughter at Point Isabel, 824; submits propositions to Generals Walker and Smith, 825, 828, 829, 830; his letter to General Slaughter, 830; propositions refused by General Walker, 832; returns to New

Orleans, 834; his letter to General Hurlbut, 834; returns to Baltimore, 835; his letter to President Diaz, 845; letter from General Carvajal to, 846; appointed to serve on Lincoln commission, 847; appointed president of Wirz commission, 852; speech of, at presentation of battle-flags to Governor Morton, 859-861; assists General Carvajal, 863; his efforts to place loan on behalf of Mexican Republic, 863, 864, 866, 868; his resignation from the army, 865; offered commission by Mexico, 869; duties assigned to, 870; made prisoner, 871; concludes connections with Mexican government, 873; on the *Everman*, 873, 874; at Monterey, 876, 877, 879, 880; his letters from Chihuahua, 881-886; nominated for Congress in 1870, 887; completes *The Fair God*, 888; receives congratulations, 889, 890; his letters to the veterans of the Mexican War, 895-899; finishes "Commodus," 899; his "The Wooing of Malkatoon," 900; attends session of Florida commission, 901; his interview in the *Indianapolis Journal*, 903-907; his letter to illegal "commission," 908-910; tendered the mission to Bolivia, 911; appointed governor of New Mexico, 912; arrival and situation in Santa Fé, 913; appeals for troops for New Mexico, 916; his letter to Carl Schurz, 917, 918; his work on *Ben-Hur*, 921, 923, 924; offered mission to Brazil, 925 n.; his detailed account of the writing of *Ben-Hur*, 926-936; his visit to Jerusalem and Judea, 936; his *Ben-Hur* published, 938; autograph letter from President Garfield to, 940, 941; his appointment as minister to Turkey, 938, 946; visits the Mosque of St. Sophia, 944;



# INDEX

- declines reappointment as governor of New Mexico, 945; letters to, relating to *Ben-Hur*, and replies, 947-956; presentation to the sultan, 957-962; friendly relations with sultan, 963, 964, 965; offer of service from the sultan, 967; his last interview with the sultan, 976, 977; his parting gift to the sultan, 979-981; his *The Prince of India*, 982, 983, 1000; Imperial Decoration of the Medjiedie conferred on, 986, 987; speech at Wingate, 990; address to graduating class at Naval Academy, 991-995; declines second offer of service from sultan, 996; declines mission to Brazil, 998; received loving-cups, 1001; had new novel in mind, 1002; death of, 1003.
- Wallace, John, 8, 9.
- Wallace, Susan E., meets Lewis Wallace, 207; courtship, 211; marriage, 225; letters from General Wallace to, 873, 875, 876, 877-886, 901, 921, 963, 968, 975, 985; describes Santa Fé, 912; letter to Henry L. Wallace, 920.
- Wallace, Colonel W. H. L., 379; meets General Lew Wallace, 403; death at Shiloh, 405 *n*, 406; at Shiloh, 476, 482, 489, 490, 491, 510, 512, 515, 516, 518, 519, 529, 531, 532.
- Wallace, William S., 14, 21, 36, 37, 964.
- Walnut Springs, 879.
- Walter, Father, defends Mrs. Surratt, 850.
- Ware, Lieutenant Addison, aide-de-camp, 347, 379, 399.
- Washburn, President, of Robert College, 944.
- Washington, Captain J. M., at Buena Vista, 610.
- Washington, General Early's march on, 790, 804, 810.
- Webster, Colonel, on Grant's staff, 386, 534.
- Webster, Daniel, mentioned, 201.
- Weichmann, Louis A., witness before Lincoln commission, 848.
- Welder, Colonel John T., witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Wells, Major, commanding First New York Veteran Cavalry, 729.
- Wharton, Major H. W., on Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680.
- Wheeler, William A., nominated for vice-president, 900.
- Whitcomb, James, governor of Indiana in 1846, 108.
- White, Dr. Charles, president of Wabash College, 894.
- Whittlesey, Colonel, commanding Twentieth Ohio, at Fort Donelson, 389, 407; at Shiloh, 543, 548, 549, 550, 554, 556, 559, 564, 565, 566.
- Wiegel, Captain W. H., at battle of Monocacy, 758, 759, 764, 771, 776, 778, 803.
- Willard, Ashbel P., party leader, 236, 239, 248.
- Willich, Colonel August, commanding Thirty-second Indiana Volunteers at Shiloh, 562, 563, 565.
- Wilson, James, 225, 226, 227.
- Wilson, Mr., General Wallace's law partner, 588, 589.
- Winchester, General Joe Johnson at, 308.
- Wirz, Captain Henry, keeper of Andersonville prison, 852; cruelty to prisoners, 853, 854, 856; found guilty and executed, 857.
- Wirz commission, appointed by President Johnson, 852; General Wallace president of, 852, 853.
- Wood, Colonel Gustavus A., witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Wood, Major, 273.
- Wood, Peter, his Minnesingers, 369, 383, 387, 391, 401, 405, 406, 407.
- Wood, General Thomas J., witness before Buell commission, 645.
- Woodhull, Captain Maxwell V.



# INDEX

- Z., on Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680, 716, 717, 750, 770, 782, 803.
- Woods, Colonel Charles R., commanding Seventy-sixth Ohio at Fort Donelson, 389, 407, 460; at Shiloh, 561, 563, 565.
- Woing of Malkatoon, The*, 368 *n*.
- Wool, General, joined by General Taylor, 160; Wallace meets, 163; at Buena Vista, 163-165, 168.
- Woolley, Lieutenant - Colonel John, on Wallace's staff at Baltimore, 680, 686, 687, 693, 803, 824.
- Worthington, Captain, 618, 619, 621.
- Worthington, Charles, collector of port of Brazos, 823, 824, 836, 838.
- Wright, General H. G., 603, 618, 622, 628.
- Wudbarger, George W., 298.
- YATES, GOVERNOR, sends troops to occupy Cairo, 336.
- Yildiz Kiosk, residence of the sultan, 958, 959.
- ZAGONYI, CHARLES, with General Frémont, 330; death of, 331 *n*.

THE END